This is the Original Edition printed in Edinburgh and issued in America by authority of the Publishers.

FEBRUARY 1920.

GENERAL LIBRARY
FEB 24 1920
UNIV. OF MICH.

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

NEW YORK:

THE LEONARD SCOTT PUBLICATION CO.,

HARR FERRER, PROP.

249 WEST 13TH STREET.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS, EDINBURGH.

Entered at the New York Post-Office as second-class matter.

Entered as second-class matter, January 13, 1902, at the post office at New York, N. Y. under the Act of March 3, 1879

Recent Fiction

DAVID BLAIZE AND THE BLUE DOOR — **By E. F. Benson**

A new story of a child in the happy land of Make-Believe and his extraordinary adventures therein. A fantasy of delightful humor that will win many friends for the author and his boy hero.

Price **$2.00** net; carriage extra — **George H. Doran Co.**

BARBARA OF BALTIMORE — **By Katharine Haviland Taylor**

A mystery-history story, centered in Baltimore. Charming people, pleasantly environed with a story of unusual gayety and with a tantalizing mystery that constantly baffles explanation.

Price, **$1.50** net; carriage extra — **George H. Doran Co.**

BELIEVE YOU ME! — **By Nina Wilcox Taylor**

Diverting and galloping fun. With a background of real people and a shrewd observation Mrs. Putnam has put between covers a most hilarious yarn.

Price, **$1.50** net; carriage extra — **George H. Doran Co.**

SCHOOLS

New Jersey

College of St. Elizabeth
Convent Station, New Jersey
45 Minutes from New York
Catholic College for Women
Registered by Regents
Standard College Preparatory Courses
Academy of St. Elizabeth
Send for Catalogue

Ohio

Art Academy of Cincinnati
Thoroughly Equipped Art School
Winter and Summer Term
J. H. GEST, Director — CINCINNATI

New York

Saint Mary's School
Mount Saint Gabriel
PEEKSKILL-ON-THE-HUDSON, N. Y.
Boarding School for Girls
Under the charge of the Sisters of St. Mary.
New fireproof building beautifully situated
For catalogues address *The Sister Superior.*

SCHOOLS

California

California Hospital, Los Angeles
School for Nurses The most noted private hospital in this beautiful residence city.

Medical, Surgical, Maternity, Eye and Ear and X-Ray Departments. In the midst of tropical gardens. Booklets free. 1414 South Hope St., Los Angeles. Also a limited number of young men (High School Graduates) admitted to a two years' course.

University of Southern California
(Los Angeles)
COLLEGES—Liberal Arts, Medical, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Law, Music, Fine Arts, Oratory and Theology.
HIGH STANDARDS in Scholarship and Morals. Expenses moderate. Climate unexcelled. 1100 Students. Send for Catalogue.
Pres. GEORGE F. BOVARD, A.M., D.D., LL.D.
University Avenue

Oregon

University of Oregon—Eugene

Graduate School	Summer School
College of Liberal Arts	School of Medicine
College of Engineering	School of Law
School of Education	School of Music

Send for Catalog — Address THE REGISTRAR

BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

No. MCCLII. FEBRUARY 1920. VOL. CCVII.

THE NINTH CRUISER SQUADRON.

BY REAR-ADMIRAL BOYLE SOMERVILLE, C.M.G.

IV.

MIDWAY between Madeira and Teneriffe, and almost on the line of navigation between them, there is a little group of three small islands, bearing the encouraging name of "Ilhos Salvagen," which is Portuguese for "Savage Islands," or, as they are better known, "The Salvages." The northern one, "Great Salvage," is separated by a ten-mile gap from the two southern, which are named respectively Great and Little Piton. They are nearly desert, and quite uninhabited. There is no certainty of rainfall at any time of year, and the only water to be found is a shallow and unpleasant-looking puddle at the bottom of a pit on Great Salvage. This had been dug by some settlers, who once came there, hopeful; but left it, hopeless, leaving their "well," a few low walls, and a couple of ruinous huts, as relics of the adventure. The only produce of the group is an unfortunate but foolishly persistent sea-bird, which comes in May, in large numbers, to produce its young. The bold Portuguese hunter follows shortly after: lugs forth from their holes in the ground, by their long outstretched necks, the silly mammas; which then are forthwith slain, dried in the sun, and carried back to Madeira for food (literally) by the thousand.

To this cheerful group of islands we were directed, quite early in the war, under "absolutely certain" intelligence that Germans had landed there, and had erected a wireless station on Great Salvage; which is a cliff-surrounded plateau, 500 feet high—eminently suited, certainly, for the purpose.

We approached with some

trepidation, as the only chart of the group was one hundred years old; while, on every side of all three islands, we could see tall white spouts of bursting spray, marking the positions of the rocky reefs that stretched their ugly arms inhospitably round the shores.

We kept at prism-binocular distance; but were able to see, quite definitely, that the islands were entirely Hunless. And, lying off, we went to target practice at one of the more prominent rock-pinnacles.

It is strange to recall this early impression of the group, remembering what a solace to us its islands became, later on! There chanced to be in our squadron a single officer of that hardy though rare breed, the Hydrographic Surveyor. By "lashed-up" means—(that is to say, "improvised")—and with a makeshift staff of assistants, a tolerable chart was produced by him, which included the whole group, with reefs, soundings, and fathom-contour lines, complete. Following this advance of scientific knowledge, the rocky horrors turned into convenient marks, by which to fix an approaching ship's position; the reefs and shoals came to eat out of our hand, so to speak, and were transformed from dangers into breakwaters against the north-easterly swell rolling in.

Accordingly, whenever circumstances permitted, we came to anchor at one or other of the islands, for a few hours of rest and recreation. If nothing else was excellent about the group, the bathing was; and so was the fishing, and oh! the extraordinary joy it was to feel *terra-firma*—even desert soil—under one's feet!

Once, when we were anchored close off Great Salvage Island, a large neutral steamer passed; and seeing us, as it appeared to them, hopelessly wrecked, broadside on the rocks, surrounded by the terrifying spouts of white water, she timidly approached, and politely inquired, "Can I render any assistance?" Her captain must have been thoroughly thankful, if amazed, to get our reply, "Much obliged for your kind offer, but quite happy here at anchor. Pleasant voyage to you."

The Salvages have their share of romance. Those who have read 'The Cruise of the *Alert*' will recall the account of her visit to one of the islands, and of the deathbed statement of the old pirate who had sailed with Captain Kidd in the Spanish Main, and his sworn declaration that large quantities of his chief's treasure had there been deposited. So circumstantial was the account, and the directions for finding it, that the British Government, years ago, actually sent a man-of-war to investigate and to dig; but nothing was ever discovered.

We were too busy enjoying ourselves, every time we went there, to fuss about a few paltry jewelled chalices, or gold pieces-of-eight; and, so far as we are concerned, they still lie hid — ghost-guarded, and intact.

Wearied as we were with

our incessant look-out for submarines, which weren't there, and by the constant, entirely bogus reports we got of them, it was almost a pleasure to find ourselves at last up against what had all the appearance of the genuine article.

We were homeward bound for repairs (at last), and not far from Finisterre. As the day dawned hazily, we sighted on the port-bow, but nearly ahead, a steamer flying British colours, with a submarine, on the surface, close under her stern. Both were apparently stopped, and the only question was, should we be in time? Every straining second, as we hurried furiously into range, we expected to see the fatal lurch, the burst of steam and smoke, the sudden swallowing up of the victim, and the peppering over the smooth floor of the sea of her loose debris, human and timber, the one clinging to the other.

We had sighted her first at 11,000 yards, and though the guns, of course, were instantly ready, this was rather too far off for a really certain and satisfactory shot at so low and slight an object—barely distinguishable, indeed, as a submarine at all. There was also the necessity of finding out whether (by any impossible chance) it was one of our own submarines, before we sank her! We had, too, to discover whether the steamer was in reality a British one. There was as yet no sign of her sinking, and perhaps we were viewing a German submarine being supplied with fuel, comfortably, from her auxiliary—flying false colours? If this were so, the supply ship should also occupy our earnest attention—besides being a more excellent target! There was only one certain method of finding out and setting at rest all these doubts—namely, the "private signal." The "challenge" had been flipped out by searchlight at the very first moment of sighting the still enigmatic scene before us. No reply. A second chance was given when the range had been lessened by 2000 yards —*i.e.*, about a mile. Again, no reply! Evidently, whatever the two vessels were about, they had not sighted us: as there was no attempt at disappearance of the submarine, nor any sign, either of alarm or joy, on the steamer. The two craft still remained in exactly the same relative attitude to one another—calm, unconcerned! It was thoroughly mystifying and disquieting. Our guns were at the "ready" position, the range-taker had just announced "seven thousand," the order to "commence" was tickling the tongue, when from the submarine there came flashing the British private signal! It was just about the nearest imaginable thing!

It turned out to be, truly, a British steamer; and she was towing the submarine to the Mediterranean! This was the explanation of the permanently-maintained distance between the two vessels, and since they were approaching us nearly end-on, the effect

was produced that both were stopped together.

Having administered an awful warning to the submarine as to what, so very nearly, might have been, and still might be, unless they kept a better look-out on a hazy morning, we sank into our mugs of early cocoa, with a deep thankfulness that we had not, a few minutes earlier, lessened the British Navy by two valuable items!

Onwards, northward, we rushed, getting every yard of speed we could out of the old ship; zigzag, zigzag we went, as we entered the danger zone south of the Channel. Every ship we sighted was doing the same; ours was not the only vessel proceeding under charge of an apparently drunken navigator.

As, one morning, we reached the Channel itself, we were welcomed home by receipt of the following message in wireless from Land's End:—

"Norwegian steamer reports having seen submarine at 10 P.M. yesterday, twenty miles S.-W. by W. from Lundy Island, steering N.-W."

She was therefore proceeding out of the Bristol Channel, right across our track to Liverpool. Immediately after publication of the news throughout the ship, there were eyes everywhere—amateur as well as professional, on watch and off watch. All hands and the cook were looking out! A fishing buoy we passed presently, at short range, came in for it heavily! It bobbed up to the crest of a wave, in front of the straining eyes of the three foremost guns' crews, and met death in an instantaneous salvo! But what a pity it wasn't the periscope it so greatly resembled! Shortly afterwards there came to us a second word of cheer from Kingstown. "Submarine seen 1½ miles off Dalkey Island at 2 P.M. to-day." We should pass *her*, too! Evening was approaching, and we were thankful to see that, with it, came a mercifully enveloping haze: a condition not usually sought out by the seaman for eulogy—but circumstances alter cases! Just as the shades of night fell, and we had informed the senior naval officer at Liverpool of our proposed arrival at the bar at dawn next day, he replied with the extremely pleasant intelligence, "Hostile submarines (in the plural) waiting off Mersey River Bar. Enter river at full speed before daylight." Indeed, we hoped we might be able to do so!

The night was dark, the mist beautifully thick, and if the submarines sighted us at all, they may well have fired their torpedoes astray. We transposed our navigational lights, from the bow-end of the ship to the stern, placing the starboard-bow light so as to throw its green ray from the port quarter; and the port-bow light to show red from the starboard quarter; while the bright white mast-head light, as "in some tall admiral," was made to show dead astern, from the after side of the main mast, at the proper

height up. Thus, any submarine sighting our lights, so placed, and directing her torpedo as for an apparently advancing steamer, would fire it into the watery space astern of us, and already passed over!

We got in quite safely, in the dark of the dawn. The submarines, two of them, had undoubtedly been seen there the day before, waiting off the bar: but seemingly had been dispersed. One of them went north, anyway; and, unfortunately, made a successful shot off the mouth of the Clyde, just at the moment that we were passing the bar light-vessel.

But they missed us, as well as two others of our armed merchant cruisers, as we dashed in at Mersey mouth, within a few hours of each other, on that exciting morning. Rarely before can so many a seaman's blessing have been bestowed upon a fog at night!

When, after a somewhat prolonged refit in England, we returned to our home on the Atlantic Ocean Wave, we found ourselves in considerably improved case; with both ship and crew much better qualified than they were in those first days to undertake their duties.

Many important and, indeed, fundamental defects in our equipment had been put as far right as they could be put; defects whose occurrence was amazing to us naval people, devoid, as at first we were, of all inner knowledge of the conditions of life for the men in a merchant steamer.

Very sensibly, no attempt was made during the refit to try and improve our fighting capacity. This was realised to be a hopeless task: as well might you equip a cow with a tiger's teeth and claws, and send her forth, single-handed, to fight Shere Khan himself, on his own ground!

The order had gone forth, accordingly, confining our duties to the Blockade; but without prejudice to anything else that might in an extremity turn up. No longer were we to reckon ourselves as cruisers *à outrance*.

In giving this order, which had come out some considerable time before our refit, the Admiralty somewhat naturally supposed that the Armed Merchant Cruisers, as they stood, were the ideal vessels for the Atlantic Blockade job. With those great holds, was there not capacity for carrying coal, water, stores, and provisions by the thousand ton? Could they not, therefore, comfortably keep at sea for months, without anxiety as to boiler and engine expenditure, and with well-fed crews? (What matter if, in connection with the crews, the adjective "fed-up" were more appropriate?) Had they not, each of them, recently been festooned by the Board of Trade with boats in such multitude, that the simultaneous boarding of indefinite numbers of suspects might be undertaken with speed and simplicity?

It was not until some of us returned to England for our first refit, and were able person-

ally to explain and exhibit things, that it was realised how mistaken were these views; nor to what a degree we, naval tenants of the A.M.C.'s, had been obliged to make "lash-up" (*i.e.*, makeshift) arrangements, in order to be able to "carry on," in any way, as intended.

Appalling, nay, impossible, as at first it seemed to the authorities, the facts were demonstrated. First, that in many of those enormous ships no proper accommodation for civilised seamen and firemen had been provided; secondly, that beyond the actual tackles (or "falls") for lowering and hoisting the boats, there were none of the ordinary, and obviously necessary additional fittings to prevent the boats from swinging about while being lowered, full of men, when the ship was rolling at sea; thirdly, that as regards the merchant crew, fine ship-men as they were, none had had any experience of boat-work except the few who chanced to be fishermen (and even these had never been taught the art of the oar); fourthly, that there were no real boats. The accessary vehicles with which, under Board of Trade regulations, passenger ships are plastered are not "boats," properly speaking, and can only be described as troughs made of wood or steel, deep and heavy, having angular ends. "Stability," using the expression either in its usual sense or as the technical term of the marine architect, does not enter into their design, nor have they any "floor." They wobble nervously when placed in the water, and nothing but dire necessity, combined with ignorance of the danger, would induce the "44 passengers" (for whom their labels promise to provide accommodation) to accept the chance of escape that they offer in a disaster, in preference to the ancient and respectable alternative of "sticking to the ship."

These vessels are just susceptible (and no more) of propulsion, and of direction; but no one, excepting perhaps a Board of Trade official (who is of the earth, earthy), would ever class them as "boats."

Nor would any instructed person name as "oars" the spatulated bedposts with which the troughs are equipped; all of the same length, from bow to stroke, and all of the same preposterous unbalanced weight. Rough-loomed, unbending, it wearied one only to look at them.

No wonder that our attempts to teach the men to pull such boats with such oars met with small success. They sat on the high thwarts, that were so high that even to touch the stretchers with their toes was beyond the reach of most of them, and they "dipped" and "bucketted," ignoring, justifiably, instructions as to stretching out or feathering; whilst the commands to "put their backs into it" were but too literally fulfilled, as the sorely-tried oarsmen's heels went up in the air, and an all-engulfing "crab" claimed him for its own!

The reason for the existence

in mail steamers of these impossible boats and unskilled oarsmen lies in a simple but little-considered fact. These vessels nowadays, almost invariably on reaching their journey's ends, either at home or abroad, no longer anchor in a harbour and communicate by boat with the shore, as in the ancient times. Instead, they go alongside a deep-water pier in a comfortable dock, and everybody walks ashore, or walks on board. Boats and boating, accordingly, are rapidly reaching a condition of atrophy: the downward path of disuse being already marked, first, by the complete disappearance from the ships of boat-lowering apparatus; next, by the existence of a mere "survival" (to use an appropriate natural history term) of boats themselves; and lastly, by the ability of the crews to manage boats being no longer outwardly apparent, though still happily latent, and able to be brought forth.

These facts are unpleasant ones, and become still more so in the contemplation of some emergency—such as the butting into an iceberg by a mail steamer on a dark night—when the best of boats and boatmen are suddenly wanted to save a thousand lives.

An emergency, though of a different kind—a long war emergency, and not a swift peace-time disaster—had come upon us now, and the only way out of the difficulty was found by supplying the A.M.C.'s with real boats—naval boats—with their proper appliances.

Once we got these, real oarsmanship soon followed, nourished into healthy existence later on by races, and even regattas. The comfort and satisfaction that followed was indescribable, in seeing boats loaded with officers and men lowered into the water in safety, moving with speed and smartness on their job, and hoisted again quickly after it was over.

Thankful men were we when the vision of the swinging, wobbling coffin-loads to which we had become accustomed, though never inured, had faded away, as it soon did, into only a distressing memory.

These surprises as to merchant-boat equipment were not, however, the greatest, by any means, that we received; nor were they the defects that really most required amendment. The first, and worst, and rudest shock reached us all on the first Sunday on which we went "rounds" of the living quarters allotted to the deck-hands and firemen of the ship's original crew. All of the men who would "join up" for "temporary service" in the War had been taken over, together with their ships, at Liverpool and elsewhere, just as they stood, straight from their "trade"; and so we saw them in their native and accustomed haunts. The contrast with anything we ever had seen before was really overwhelming.

The quarters allotted to the

crew of a man-of-war are assuredly not laid out in over-luxurious fashion. There is, for each twenty men or so of the crew, a long well-scrubbed table, with "stools" (plain strong benches) on each side of it. There is a locker, or its equivalent space, for holding each man's clothing or kit-bag; there are "mess-shelves" for holding crockery, knives, forks, &c.; and there is tinned ware for the table—"kettles" and "tin dishes" of an adamantine build. It is not comfortable furniture, but it is adequate, and, above all, it is clean. There is air, anyway, and (dependent on the ship) usually quite a fair amount of space. When it is desired to clear the deck, both tables and stools, having legs that fold up, can be quickly hooked overhead, flat, and out of the way. As to beds, each man has his hammock, hung up, swinging for the night, but lashed up neatly and stowed away during the day. Nothing is so comfortable to sleep in on board a ship at sea as a hammock, and no other kind of bed occupies less space. Then there is ample washing accommodation for everybody, and, for the stokers, large bathrooms; so that there is every possibility for cleanliness and refreshment after a long hot watch amidst oil, coal-dust, boilers, and engines. Ever since steamships began to be in the Navy, some sort of bath-room space has been arranged for the stokers: though probably this dispensation originated less in kindness and humanity, than in preventing the smallest shadow of engine-room produots from marring the whiteness and brightness of the Old Navy's decks. The above simple lower-deck furnishings were to us, naval folk, a commonplace of life to which we had been accustomed from our callow midshipmanhood; and (in our ignorance) we supposed such to be the sealed pattern accommodation for *all* seamen, merchant as well as naval. So, when we stepped jauntily, on that first bright "Sunday Rounds," into our men's quarters, for inspection thereof, the amazement, and gradually the horror, at sight of what we then encountered, are sentiments that still remain fresh, at the end of five years, of experiences sufficiently overwhelming to blot out most other things.

We were conducted into the very "eyes" of the ship—to the forecastle, and the narrow depths beneath it: to the part which, in the great Atlantic liners, dips, shuddering, into the monstrous head-seas; bears on its front the first and worst of the furious impact, and carries on its dripping shoulders the chief of the strain and motion of the labouring ship. No place this, at any time, for men; but, especially, not for men tired out in long watches below, among the boilers, or on deck, in the fierce wind, rain, and cold spray. Yet this was the region allotted to the crew: squeezed away here into the least pos-

sible area by the greedy owners of the ship, so as to permit of more space for cabins in the comfortable parts, further aft, for those who *paid* for their accommodation. The word "Bolshevik" had not, at this period of the war, been invented; but that is what we felt like as we entered, and regarded these quarters.

There were three decks, one beneath the other, each divided into steel-walled compartments, whose sides had once (long ago) been daubed over, first with thin red lead, and afterwards with thick and sticky white paint. The decks, also steel, were thickly bedded with cement—the surface of which resembled, to weary feet, the pavement of a city street both in appearance and in comfort. Each compartment was illuminated by two tiny and hermetically screwed-up glass scuttles, and was "ventilated" by a pipe leading from the "ceiling" to the upper air—but now tightly stuffed up with a black and dripping rag, in order to exclude the salt sea that poured down it at every dip of the labouring ship, from its opening on the forecastle.

The deck-hands occupied the upper compartments, which, as they opened more or less on the upper air, were much the best; the firemen inhabited the deeper depths beneath; and with a horrified interest we descended.

Round the filthy sides of each den there were riveted as many iron bed-frames, one above the other, as spaces could be found for them, to the number of about fourteen. Regardless of the solemn hour of Captain's Sunday Rounds, each bedplace contained its proper human occupant, dirty and sweaty, just as he had come from the stokehold. (This profanity—blasphemy, even—of the day and the hour, apparently here a matter of every-Sunday custom, filled us of the Navy with a shocked indignation indescribable!) Each man was couched on a "Donkey's Breakfast." This consists of a coarse brown sack, tightly stuffed with old hard straw. It is not "shaped," as is a mattress or palliasse, with square corners and flat sides and surfaces, but is merely a bulged and overfilled bag. Sorrow befall the donkey who had its contents for "breakfast," or even as bedding litter! The R.S.P.C.A. would be "on to" the owner of that four-footed animal, and mighty quickly!

As for the rest of the furniture or fittings of this pleasant home from home on the sea, there was none! No table, no chair, no bench; and as a receptacle for clothes, a little shelf that scarce would hold a cap.

As to the presence of the men at this holy moment of Sunday rounds, there seemed to be no explanation required. The long-sanctioned custom was that each man, as he came off watch, whatever the day or hour, threw himself down on his bunk, just as he was, and there remained

until it was time for him to go to his next turn of watch in the stokehold.

As for meals, when the time for them came round, the members of each den took it in rotation to go up to the cook's galley and bring down thence, in a large tin dish, the mess of meat and gravy, or whatever was provided. On its arrival, each man reached forth from his bed, took with his hand out of the dish as it went by his gruesome portion, and, lying there, devoured it. This interesting interval of refreshment was, in fact, in process at the time of rounds, so that we had the advantage actually of seeing the animals fed without extra charge. It was, indeed, a much more degrading spectacle than any that the Zoo, at its most carnivorous, has to offer. There were no plates, knives, or forks — no table (as has already been indicated) on which to lay them, nor even a bench on which to sit down to eat.

The arrangements for personal washing were outside the dens, and consisted of a row of minute enamel basins, each holding a proportionate supply of water. An inquiry as to the position of the "Stoker's Bathroom" was met with a smile of pitying amazement at so landsman-like an inquiry from an unquestioned man-of-the-sea! Such an effeminacy was entirely unknown to these hardy folk!

We must forbear from any description of the bestially primitive "conveniences" of these terrible abodes. They had instantly to be closed. . . .

Inspection completed, the order went forth on the spot, and the ship's carpenters were set to work without delay to convert one of the big empty decks, whence the cabins had been swept at Liverpool, into a proper living place for the firemen, with tables, "stools," bed-places, bedding, clothes lockers, and baths. Something of the sort had already been done with the 2nd-class saloon, for the accommodation of the extra ship's company, necessary upon the vessel becoming a "man-of-war"; and this formed a model in the arrangements for the rehousing of the original crew. There was no difficulty as regards the provision of baths; for there were, standing in groups of four about the empty deck, the baths of the former passengers. They were no longer chastely enclosed, for each had been stripped of its wooden casing before we left England and was now lying gaunt and bare to the world. Plates for food, table gear generally, blankets and bedding, all were provided from the ship's store, but not without a gasp of indignant reluctance from the former chief steward; and soon the wretched firemen were established in their new quarters. Four pensioner naval chief stokers, dug out for the war, were then sent for, and ordered to live on the new mess-deck, forming, as it were, a mission of civilisation, in order to in-

struct in the primitive, but, to these poor wretches, the entirely unknown arts of decent living at sea.

The result was marvellously satisfactory. The response to treatment was immediate, and within a month the new mess-deck had the well-scrubbed appearance of that of a man-of-war; while the captain was hailed by its inhabitants as "the firemen's friend."

As to their former abode, when its human occupants had been cleared out of it, a close inspection of its chinks and corners—nay, even of its open surfaces — revealed the dreadful fact that it was "crawling"! There is only one cure on such occasions—"the ditch"; and presently the broad Atlantic received into its deepest embrace every removable fitting: the Donkey's Breakfasts having already, some time before, sailed away on its all obliterating waves. Carbolic was libated upon the once filthy, but now closely scrubbed, cement floors and rusty "walls"; and the key was then turned on those unspeakable compartments "for the duration."

More lies in this illumination of a dark corner—a great deal—than the plainly obvious need for a change in such conditions. For what is the result, in this instance, of man's inhumanity to man? Only the most miserable and the most ignorant of men, unemployables of all sorts and sizes, and from all causes, will enlist into a life so deeply far below the common lot of men. Yet is the ignorance of these poor devils, self-styled "firemen," not less black and dense than that of those who engage them! It seems, indeed, to be supposed by these recruiters that no special training is necessary for the duties of a fireman: that "anybody" will do, and that all the requirements are fulfilled if the applicant possesses sufficient arms and legs to wield a shovel! Anything so truly inane can scarcely be conceived!

Stoking is a skilled profession—in some respects highly skilled; and if properly instructed men were employed in the Merchant Service, the saving in coal to the great steamship companies—and to the country at large—would run into thousands of tons every year, and even in every month.

When, during the war, the merchant firemen were placed, for the first time, beside our naval stokers, and, above all, came under the orders, discipline, and instruction of our stoker petty-officers, they received the shock of their lives! They then, very angrily, discovered that they knew nothing whatever about their profession, which, according to their ideas, consisted in heaping periodically into a furnace as much raw coal as it would hold, shutting the door, and sitting down while it burnt away — and the slower the better! This mistake of theirs has long since been lived down. Perhaps, now that the war is over and coal become so precious a commodity, the

great steamer companies are now reaping the benefit of the war training in stoking that these men got, and now are saving fuel and increasing speed through the scientific combustion of coal? Perhaps, on the other hand, their former men, now skilled and civilised, will not go back to them? If things are allowed to go on as before, and if every decently comfortable part of these great ships is still complacently robbed from their crews, in order to fill them with passengers' cabins, waste of the country's coal must inevitably result. The skilled men will take their knowledge elsewhere, and the stokeholds will again be filled by the miserable and the ignorant.

When the last day of "leave" had been left behind; the last repair repaired; the last "lash-up" unlashed, and replaced by a permanent improvement, we were a much more efficient Armed Merchant Cruiser than before, in both *matériel* and in *personnel*. The war was getting on by this time; and the engagements of the hired crew, hopefully made out in 1914 as "for six months," had now grimly (but still not unhopefully) been changed into "for the duration.' That made far towards our future comfort and restfulness. Our teeth had never properly been "in it" before: it had been, as it were, only a growl and a snatch.

The feral instincts of the merchant crew, never really brought into subjection, had begun, indeed, to assert themselves when their first engagement of "six months" with "the Government" had been exceeded, and they still found themselves kept away from the Almighty Burst at Liverpool that, in all previous engagements, had been the inevitable sequel to each "voyage." It was not *their* War; and all they wanted was their Rights. This Call of the Wild to them had now, during the refitting period, been fulfilled (not so satisfactorily, perhaps, as had been hoped, owing to police and liquor restrictions); and here they were, back on board, sailing south; wondering, vaguely, *why* the Navy should fine a man for returning from leave drunk? In what other condition, indeed, could or should he be on such an occasion?

On taking up the threads of our work after our return, we realised by degrees that a big change had taken place in the numbers of travelling neutral steamers. Very few were anywhere to be encountered; and as our own and Allied merchant ships were now, by Admiralty Order, spread wide on new and secret tracks, they too were no longer to be met with on our usual beat, the "Trade Route."

This enforced deflection from the usual track was deeply disliked and disbelieved in by the masters of all ships —ever the blackest of reactionary conservatives. They "could see no sense in it," and bitterly resented being made to lay courses which took them to their ports by

longer distances, thus burning more coal than the company allowed for the run, and, worst of all, differed from those so long accepted as "The Route."

One day as we wandered hawking over the now nearly empty seas, we met by a strange chance, within a few hours of each other, two Dutch ships. We proceeded to board them; and each in turn produced an interesting comment on the effects of the blockade at home.

The first steamer we encountered was lolling idly on the smooth warm sea, sending up into the calm air a straight column, many yards high, of smoke and waste steam. She was stopped, and apparently "broken down." We suspected a dodge of some sort, and approached very cautiously. There had already been so many "surprise packets" that the greatest circumspection was necessary. However, it turned out that she was quite genuinely disabled, and was, indeed, engaged at the moment in plugging leaky condenser tubes with wood! The captain reported sadly that he had left the happy if neutral land of Holland ten days before, where they had had a "refit"; but that there was now no copper or brass to be had there with which to make even the smallest of the required repairs to their condenser. Not long after the return of our boarding party, the ailing Dutchman, plugged to last for a few miles more, pulled himself together, and slowly passed away over the horizon southward, *en route* to "the Plate." Her condensers must nearly have become "dummy" by the time she arrived there.

The other ship we met was the *Ecuador*, a brand-new vessel on nearly her maiden trip. She was a nice little ship, and by her appearance seemed to have been built to carry passengers; so we were surprised on boarding her to find she was carrying cargo only. This fact was also due to the impossibility of obtaining either brass or copper in Holland. The frames for the glass in the orifices known to the travelling landsman as "port-holes" (but, properly speaking, "scuttles"), are heavy castings of "metal"—*i.e.*, brass. As none of this could be obtained, there was nothing for it but to secure a long sheet of steel over the row of holes in the ship's side, thus making it practically impossible to carry passengers, who might legitimately object to cabins having neither light nor air.

Not long afterwards we had dim and secret rumours, for the "umteenth" time, of the arrival in our waters of a "German raider." So many similar *Wolf* cries had already come, and then, with their echoes, vanished into the thin air of lies whence they had originated, that we felt disinclined to believe in this one. None the less, it would be madness to take no special steps. "Something" had to be done, and it had to be done with dignity and caution, so as not to permit the Germans on shore to laugh, hap-

pily, at any sign of over-anxiety on our part, and thus encourage them to prepare more lies.

Accordingly, our poor little squadron, from various causes attenuated at the moment to three ships, began zigzagging carefully over our patrol area in a pattern arranged so as to cover, economically, as much ground as possible in a given time. We knew that one of the chief reasons for the originating of these German romances was to make us burn as much coal, unnecessarily, as possible. It caused both trouble and expense, of course, to undertake these extra and extended patrollings; that was inevitable; but it gave us great satisfaction to counter the enemy object by reducing both worry and cost to the lowest possible figures.

However, on this particular occasion, as it turned out, the cries of *Wolf* were genuine (or, to be accurate, it was the *Moewe*, for the *Wolf* was the Atlantic raider of the following year). On a certain lovely Sunday morning, while still, on each new "leg" of our zigzags, our eyes were straining over ever-new horizons, the *Ariadne* and the *Appam* were cleverly captured by the *Moewe*, while the *Clan Mactavish*, after a most plucky and honourable fight, was sunk the same evening by the same assailant. Knowing the keen look-out we were keeping, it seemed to us, in the first smart of disappointment, to have been an extraordinary piece of good luck for the Germans. But they had evidently sized up the chances of meeting any of our ships and taken them, trusting (as they safely could) to the fact that the sea is wide.

Nobody knows, or believes, how wide it is until they come out into it, to see for themselves; and, apart from this proof by personal observation, there is the precise and mathematical one. Let the patrol-area be plotted on paper, on a large scale, in all its square thousands of sea miles; and then place anywhere on it the little sixpenny circle, representing the twelve-mile radius visible from a ship's look-out; and the reasons for missing the sighting of a ship (quite apart from any fortuitous cause, such as "night-time" or "visibility") become absurdly apparent. As to the chances of the actual meeting of two ships, complicated as they are by questions of coal and speed, wind and weather, they approximate, as nearly as may be, to zero itself.

In spite of our elaborate zigzags, it was, in reality, absolutely normal that the *Moewe* escaped us; it would have been extraordinary luck, on the other hand, if we had sighted or (still more) met her. Where she certainly did have a "slice of luck," however, was with "wireless." Both the *Appam* and the *Clan Mactavish* reported, subsequently, that they had sent out distress signals; and though our

cruisers were, on each occasion, within easy range of hearing their calls for help (being within 150 miles distance on each occasion), none of their "S.O.S." signals reached our listening instruments, owing to merely chance reasons, too technical to describe.

The raider, accordingly, proceeded unmolested southward towards Brazil; and it was not until ten days after the *Appam* affair that we got definite news of the German's highly successful trip.

This news was shortly afterwards followed by its visible evidences, through the arrival at Santa Cruz of one of the *Moewe's* captures—the British steamer *Westburn*, filled with the crews, numbering 207 men, from the ships she had sunk. All these men were successfully landed, and handed over to the consulates interested; and, whilst new and interesting questions (for jurists only) of international law, respecting the status of the "provisionally interned" ship, were sizzling to and fro over the cables, between Spain, England, and the Islands, the German crew of the *Westburn* calmly pulled out the plug and sunk the ship at her anchorage, thus disposing of the whole question. It was clever and amusing, and, altogether, "good hunting."

There is no doubt that Graf von Doehne Schlodien, the captain of the *Moewe*, deserved all his success. Fortune favours the bold; and, moreover, he left behind him no stain on the records of honourable sea-warfare. Pluck, skill, and humanity—above all, pluck—marked his dashing raid from Germany. Single-handed, he put forth into an ocean full of smarting and watching enemies; up and down the trade routes he went, sinking, burning, and destroying, whilst saving all ships' crews; and the whole adventure, together with his successful flight back to Wilhelmshaven (where the *Moewe* arrived, untouched, on 4th March, after a two months' "flip"), constitutes a feat which we might feel proud to place to our own credit.

This exploit was almost immediately followed by the Declaration of War by Germany against Portugal.

The condition of "neutrality" of Portugal had always been somewhat tenuous; and when, at last, all the German steamers sheltering at the various ports were seized by the Portuguese authorities (on the justifiable, if rather "thin," excuse of saving them from *sabotage* by their own crews), the tenuity wore through. During the act of taking over the steamers, and before war had actually been declared, the Germans gave the future belligerent a taste of their charming methods. An armed party of Portuguese soldiers was sent to take over charge of the steamship *Schwartzburg*, sheltering at Ponta Delgado, in the Azores. On leaving the ship, the German crew left behind them several bottles of beer, and a single bottle labelled "Rhum." The discipline of

their military successors, as the Germans well knew it would be, was, to put it with moderation, inferior to their own; and the temptation was severe. The liquor was poisoned: four of the men who drank of it died in agonies shortly after; two more lingered a few days, a seventh recovered. When this piece of news reached the people of Madeira, the war became a very personal affair to each individual. The Germans in their midst were thankful for even the comparative security afforded by "internment."

The Declaration of War meant the coming of German submarines. There was no doubt about them this time; and our entirely defenceless "base," accordingly, had to be shifted to a harbour, which, while it would be much overstating matters to describe it as "safe," was certainly less dangerous than Madeira. This was St Vincent, in the Cape de Verde Islands, and here we arrived on 17th March 1916, and celebrated St Patrick's Day by ending it with our first night at anchor, after 171 consecutive ones at sea. When the flagship arrived, it was, indeed, for the Admiral and his staff their 385th successive night of the cradle of the deep!

This was the beginning of the end of the Ninth Cruiser Squadron. We still patrolled the wide expanses of ocean around us; we still guarded, through the remainder of 1916, the vast British interests, the valuable store of coal, and the greatest submarine cable-station in the world, in that nearly desert island. The need for our existence was dying, however, all the time; and 1917 saw the return to England of the last of our cruisers, wonderfully maintained in a going condition through all those years of incessant sea-work.

It was time. The early interests and novelties of our patrol had disappeared; the submarine menace in our waters was now quite real, and could not adequately be guarded against (as witness the unembarrassed shelling of Funchal by one of them, late in 1916), and our usefulness had gone.

We left without a sigh of regret, except for the unfortunates of the cable station, still obliged to remain there in the burning sun, the howling, blustering, ceaseless N.E. trade wind of St Vincent, under its brazen sky, and enveloped in the brown cloud of perpetually flying sand, that are its unpleasant characteristics.

How soft and green was England—how happy—in spite of short rations, and of a "submarine zone" still dominating the depths of her "inviolable sea"!

FOLLOW THE LITTLE PICTURES!

BY ALAN GRAHAM.

CHAPTER XII.

LIFE at Hopeton very soon settled down into a kind of routine. I had my own way with Duncan, whose confidence I quickly won. By keeping him as much as possible away from his father, and arranging for him to have his meals with Mrs Cunningham, the old housekeeper, I got him into a more healthy state of mind, which soon reacted upon his body. The Laird never interfered. He left me an entirely free hand, and practically ignored the existence of the boy.

His own attention was taken up to a great extent with the study of chess. He would spend hours working out the variations of some fresh opening, which he would afterwards spring upon me at our game in the evening. I was always more than a match for him, and several unorthodox gambits that he attempted ended in rapid fiascos. The more often I beat him, however, the greater his respect for me seemed to grow, and the power I attained over him in this way gradually had its effect upon his behaviour to the rest of the household.

As time went on I found that I could often nip one of his outbursts of anger in the bud by means of a few quiet words. He grew to be ashamed of losing his temper in my presence, and would often restrain himself until I had gone, but give the more violent vent to his rage in my absence.

Marigold was quick to note this change. She and I were seldom alone, though living under the same roof. Duncan was generally with me in the day, and chess took up most of my evenings. One morning, however, when I had kept the boy in bed with a cold, I met her picking flowers in the garden, and we had a chance of exchanging views.

"I sometimes wonder, Dr Seaton," she said, after we had talked for a few minutes on indifferent subjects,—"I sometimes wonder if you don't find our life here very monotonous."

"It is so new to me that, on the contrary, I find it very interesting," I answered.

"In any case, you have the satisfaction of knowing that you are doing a great deal of good."

"How so?" I asked, for it had not struck me in this light.

"Look how Duncan has im-

Copyrighted in the United States of America by Messrs Little, Brown, & Co.

proved in health and spirits—how much more . . . manageable my father is! I myself have to thank you for taking a great load off my mind."

Indeed I had already noticed how much better Marigold looked than on the night of my arrival. The frightened glance of her eyes was all but gone, and there was a touch of healthy colour in her cheeks.

"If my coming has had any part in these improvements, I am more than repaid," I said.

"If only father would stop worrying about—about what I must not discuss with you," she said with a smile, "my mind would be at rest. He still spends a lot of time over the translation he has of the Flemish paper that is lost. It is that which makes him so irritable. There is a mystery that he can't solve."

"He has had no further communication with your brother at Blackdykes, I suppose?"

Marigold shook her head sadly.

"He never will," she said with a sigh. "And I dare not see Roy either, for if father heard of it I don't know what would happen."

I had often wondered if my first patient had recovered from her injury, and had once or twice considered calling at the farm, but each time I thought better of it. I did not want to do anything that would upset the Laird.

Even as it was, I found myself in danger of running counter to his wishes by following up my acquaintance with Dr Forbes. I had met the old Doctor driving with his daughter several times, and if I happened to be in Kilbrennan I generally dropped in for an hour at the Doctor's house. After all, as Betty had said, Laird Tanish had not bought my soul. Life was none too lively at Hopeton, and surely I was justified in choosing my own friends. The character of Dr Forbes appealed to me very much, and he and I had become fast friends. As for Betty, I found her a tremendous relief from the solemnity of Hopeton, where we rarely smiled and never laughed. She was always cheerful and amusing, but with a touch of real kindliness that prevented her from appearing frivolous.

It was during one of these visits to Kilbrennan—about two months after my arrival in the north—that I came in contact, once again, with Jabez Morgan.

I had come over as usual by the old Roman road, and had met Betty Forbes on the hillside. We had met thus in our rambles several times, naturally enough, for we were both fond of the open air, and the old road among the hills was Betty's favourite walk. As we went through the village street towards the Doctor's house—for Betty insisted that I should stop to tea—we passed the Hopeton Arms, Kilbrennan's only hotel, and in the doorway stood Morgan, surveying the neighbourhood through his spectacles, and

looking as simple and harmless a creature as one could wish to meet.

He recognised me as I approached, and came running out into the street, all smiles, to meet me. As for me, I felt a tightening round the heart as I caught sight of the man —a feeling such as one would experience in the sudden shock of a motor accident,—something was going to happen!

"Dear, dear, dear! Now fancy meeting you here, Seaton!" he exclaimed, shaking me vigorously by the hand.

"I told you I was coming, so it surely can't be such a great surprise," I answered, none too heartily.

"Yes, yes! But people often change their minds, and I reckoned you'd think better of it when you'd tasted the joys of London. And how is our friend the Squire—I hear they call him Laird in this wilderness—and Miss Marigold? You see, young lady," he continued, turning with great affability to Betty, who had stood by meanwhile regarding him with a smile of mingled interest and amusement, "the Doc. here and I chummed up aboard ship—roosted together as you might say—and your local potentate with his daughter came over on the same boat. Quite a happy little family we were! Our friend the Squire——"

"You can hardly be said to have been very intimate with him," I interrupted cuttingly, incensed at his freedom towards Betty.

"Oh yes, we were intimate enough. Perhaps not, strictly speaking, *friendly*, but certainly intimate," he replied unabashed, and chuckled over his words, as if they had some meaning known only to himself.

"That sounds almost as if you were one of the family," said Betty, smiling upon him in quite a friendly fashion. "As a rule, the closer the relationship, the more ructions there are in the camp."

"Dear, dear," exclaimed Morgan. "You *are* a noticing young lady."

He looked at Betty closely, as if he had suddenly seen reason to take a greater interest in her. Then suddenly I remembered the astonishing resemblance I had noticed between Morgan and young Roy Tanish. Had Betty seen it too, I wondered?

"I suppose you are acquainted with our friends the Tanishes?" asked Morgan of Betty.

"Yes, Marigold is almost my only girl friend."

I was surprised to find Betty so ready to be affable with Morgan, forgetting that she had none of the knowledge that rendered me so suspicious of him.

"Then, perhaps—seeing the Doc. here seems a bit touchy on the subject—perhaps you wouldn't mind telling me if they are all well and flourishing?"

"Yes, there is nothing the matter at Hopeton, so far as I know."

"Old gentleman's temper pretty much as usual?"

Betty smiled, showing a sparkle of white teeth.

"Variable to stormy, speaking barometrically," she replied; "so at least I understand, for he and I are not the best of friends, and I see as little of him as possible. Are you staying long in the district, Mr—— You did not mention your friend's name, Dr Seaton!"

I was compelled to go through the form of an introduction.

"Ah! That's the point, Miss Forbes," said Morgan in reply to Betty's question. "I am staying as long in the district as it will take to carry through my business—and that's a conundrum I can't guess the answer to."

"Somewhat vague," agreed Betty.

"Perhaps you'd drop in and see me in this one-horse hotel, Seaton," said Morgan, turning again to me. "Have a chat—talk over old times. There's one or two things I'd like to say to you, if I may."

I thought it much safer to have nothing to do with the man, but on the other hand I was anxious to know if he intended to come to Hopeton—and, if so, when. I felt sure he would cause trouble, and I wanted to be able to warn Marigold in advance. She, who knew the circumstances, would be able to judge if it was possible to keep him away.

With this passing through my mind, I agreed to call at the hotel before I left the village, and we parted for the moment.

"I like your Mr Morgan," said Betty, as we continued up the village street. "He looks honest in a way, and yet he seems to be pretty cute—a wily variety of bird, I should think. He has an innocent kind of look which is mostly smile and spectacles. Take both of these away and he would be a different man altogether—and yet I like him."

I had a momentary picture of Morgan as I had seen him that night in our cabin with his glasses off, and I marvelled at Betty's rapid and accurate judgment. I wondered if she was equally justified in liking the man.

Dr Forbes was away at an outlying farm, so Betty and I had tea entirely by ourselves. As the conversation still turned upon Morgan, in whom Betty seemed to take a great interest, I described my meeting with him aboard the *Sphinx*, and told her of the feud that seemed to exist between Morgan and the Tanishes. I did not feel justified in speaking of Laird Tanish's nocturnal visit to our cabin, but with that exception I related pretty much what I have already set down of our life aboard ship.

"So, you see," I concluded, "you are quite right in thinking that Morgan is not so simple as he looks. Whether he is honest or not is another matter."

"I don't see that you have told me anything against the poor man," replied Betty.

"The fact that the Monster of the Glen was horribly down on him is rather in his favour. As for Marigold, she told you there was nothing against him, and yet she was very rude to him when he spoke to her. But then girls are rather unaccountable. She may be fond of him! That would explain her contradictions."

"You don't seem to have a high opinion of your sex, then?" I said inquiringly.

"No woman has!" she answered. "Each of us thinks she is the only sensible one in the mob. That is why women condescend to one another so much — and hate each other for doing so. But we are getting away from Mr Morgan. Do you know, I am quite certain that he is a Tanish."

"I think you must be right," I agreed. "He certainly resembles Roy."

"Yes, and the Monster too. But I thought you had never met Roy?"

"I did — once," I replied. "I might as well tell you, though I have kept the story to myself so far."

I must admit that I found it difficult to keep anything from Betty. She was so ready to be interested in what one had to say, and so honest and open herself, that it seemed the most natural thing possible to tell her things that one would not have dreamt of mentioning to another. So now I found myself describing to her my arrival in Kilbrennan, and my meeting with Roy Tanish and his wife. I told her everything as it had happened, up to the time of my appearance at the door of Hopeton.

"You are a regular mine of mysteries," she said, when I reached the end of my story. "I can't make head or tail of it all. Do you believe that some one shot Mrs Roy?"

I nodded, but said nothing.

"Unless it was the Monster himself, in a more boisterous frame of mind than usual, I don't know any one in the neighbourhood who would be likely to do such a thing."

I began to wish that I had not told the story. The Laird *had* been out with a shot-gun that night!

"Then you go dragging in a mysterious paper, which probably means nothing at all — and blood-stains on it, bless you! You really ought to be at Scotland Yard, or even Baker Street, Bob!"

We had drifted to the use of one another's Christian names in the course of our country walks. With such a friendly girl as Betty it was inevitable.

"Are you on calling terms at Blackdykes?" I asked.

"I called once, but I don't seem to get on with Marie, and she never returned the visit. Still, I have a good mind to go and see that she is all right. They never sent for the Dad, so the injury could not have been serious."

We drifted away from the subject, and shortly afterwards I remembered my appointment with Morgan, and took my leave.

CHAPTER XIII.

Morgan received me effusively when I entered the little sitting-room he had engaged at the Hopeton Arms.

"Come along in, Seaton. Take the arm-chair. I'm afraid it is a bit hard though, like everything else in our poor old motherland. Dear, dear! Fancy us both turning out to be Scotch in the roots. We must have been thrown together by Providence, Seaton, so that you might be able to help me in my plans."

"It couldn't have been Providence, for Providence never makes mistakes," I replied. "I don't intend to be mixed up in your plans, whatever they may be. I am engaged by Tanish to look after his boy—Tanish and you are on bad terms. Obviously it is not to my advantage to have anything to do with you."

"Dear, dear, dear! You are very impetuous, Seaton. But I like a man that speaks out what is in his mind. You are quite wrong, though. It may be far more to your advantage to be friendly with me than with Tanish. Besides, I don't want to compromise you with your employer. On the contrary——"

"Look here, Morgan," I interrupted; "the only help you can get from me is in the way of advice—and my advice is, clear out of the district. I don't know what little game you have on, but I'm sure you are going to make trouble at Hopeton. You once told me you had a great admiration for Miss Tanish. You will cause her a lot of anxiety if you stay. We have just succeeded in getting her father into a quieter frame of mind, and everything is going on swimmingly. Your appearance will rouse the Laird to new spasms of rage. You know that you always affect him in that way."

"Very true, Seaton, what you say," agreed Morgan, who had listened mildly to all my remarks. "But don't you think that you look at things too much from the Tanish point of view. What about the Morgan side of it, now? Here's me, travelled all the way from London to my benighted motherland for the purpose of ingratiating myself with Marigold Tanish. Now you may take it from me, Seaton, that I don't leave until I've got round that girl! I've got to see her, I've got to talk to her and explain things a bit, and it's up to you to get me the first interview without the Squire knowing of it."

All this was said in Morgan's customary gentle deprecating way, but I knew enough of him by this time to be sure that he meant every word. I did not mean to be browbeaten into acting as his cat's-paw, however.

"Why should I be your go-between?" I demanded. "I tell you I don't mean to be mixed up in any of your doings."

"As to why," replied Morgan with a gentle smile, "the explanation is simple. You would not like me to march up to the door of Hopeton and ask for Miss Tanish. There would be a hell of a row, which is what you want to avoid. So you see, from your own point of view, it will be much better to arrange a meeting privately for me."

I felt in a cleft stick, for what he said was true. I could see no way out of the difficulty, and was on the point of admitting as much when Morgan spoke again.

"Look here, Seaton," he said, and as he spoke he crossed the room and put his hand on my shoulder in a friendly fashion. "You are out of your depth in this business. It's all mystery to you. Heaven knows there's plenty mystery for the rest of us who are in it, but for you who have been kept in the dark all along, it must be worse. I suppose Tanish has never told you what he wanted of me in America?"

I shook my head.

"I daresay he hasn't swanked about being related to me neither?"

"No," I said. "But recently I have guessed it."

Morgan smiled broadly.

"You mean that your pretty Miss Forbes guessed it for you in the twinkle of a gnat's eyebrow! Dear, dear, she is a cute piece of goods, your Miss Forbes. But I like her. You're a lucky man, Seaton. All the lavish flows your way. All the more reason why you should do your damnedest for me."

"Whatever is in the wind, it does not concern me," I said stubbornly. "You can easily send Miss Tanish a note."

"Perhaps if I tell you more, you may be more friendly towards me," said Morgan. "At present all you know is that our friend the Squire—my forty-second cousin by the way—calls me a thief, a swindler, a rogue, a blackguard, and any other tasty little title that crosses his august mind. Also you know, that Marigold his daughter does not hold yours truly in high repute—but I don't believe you have ever heard her call me any of these pretty names, eh?"

"No," I agreed. "She has even gone so far as to say that she had no reason to doubt your honesty."

"Heaven bless her!" smiled Morgan, and I did not know whether it was in earnest or burlesque. "Well, I'll tell you the story. You can picture me leading a peaceful life in Chestnuthill, N.Y., undisturbed by the slightest thought of my English relations. I am a portrait painter, and if you knew anything at all about modern art, the name of Jabez Morgan would be familiar to you. Don't apologise. It's no disgrace to you,

but it shows the value of fame."

He paused to offer me a cigarette, and light one for himself.

"Dear, dear, it's a strange thing is family affection," he continued, as he blew a great cloud of smoke from his lungs. "Along comes the Squire with his pretty daughter, reveals himself to me as the long-lost cousin, who has looked me up while touring the States, and sits plump down in my little place like a clam.

"I treated them to the best I had — showed them the sights, introduced them to my friends, gave parties for them, —altogether the Squire had no cause to complain of his welcome. And note this, Seaton. At that time I just took the old boy's word that he was my cousin. I knew nothing of my ancestry. We don't take much stock in corpses over yonder, as you know. Along comes the Squire, tells me I am the last descendant of the younger branch of the family, and there you are. Of course I knew that my mother's name was Tanish, and that she hadn't a relation left that I could borrow from, so I guessed he was right—which he was, as it turned out, except on one point.

"Well, this went on for some weeks, and we all had a real good time. I got fair crazed with Marigold. I won't say she was ditto to me, but she was as friendly and cousinly as a young girl could well be, and I began to have hopes of joining the two branches up into one again.

"Bit by bit our friend the Squire began to let me into the history of the family. I'm not strong on it even now, but I can tell you enough to give you an idea how we drifted across the pond.

"It seems that way back in early times, when the Stewarts were mucking around anyhow in the old country, our little lot were all for the nobby side when the ructions began. There was a certain Roy Tanish fought in the rebellion of 1715, and got his skull cracked for his pains. He had two sons, had Roy, who were in petticoats and pinnies at the time, and it was about these two sons that the Squire and I had our first rumpus.

"I'll give the Squire's version first, for it was all news to me and I didn't doubt a word of it. According to him, then, these two sons were called Dougal and Hamish—Dougal being the elder and the heir to the estate of Hopeton, which was then a much grander affair than it is now. Years passed by and the two boys grew up. According to the Squire, Dougal, the elder brother, was a quiet, inoffensive kind of a mutt; while Hamish, the younger brother, was a dashing go-ahead fellow, who got mixed up in all the plots and games that were going on round about the French Court.

"Along comes the next rebellion, which, as you know, took place in 1745. By this

time the boys were well on in the thirties, and Dougal had married and settled down at Hopeton. Master Hamish, like the bold bad boy he was, was in the thick of the trouble.

"Well, according to the Squire, Hamish was over in Ayrshire before the rebellion opened out, making arrangements for a general rising in the district and turning everything that was negotiable into dollars. He did his damnedest to rush brother Dougal into the biz., but Doug. was a fly old cuss and lay low. The utmost he would do was to give Hamish all the dust he could scrape together by levying toll on his tenants. In this way he hoped to be on good terms with the Pretender if he came out top, and at the same time avoid trouble if Bonnie Prince Charlie backed a dud.

"Hamish got together a good fat wad of greenbacks. He didn't send them over to Charlie in France—probably he knew his fellow-conspirators too well. His idea was to present the treasure to the boss himself when he came over and make sure of all the credit. However, it never came off. The plot fizzled out. Hamish had banked his fund somewhere, to be drawn at the right moment, but when the other side roped him in—which they did when his luck was out—he never had a chance to get at it.

"According to the laws of those days, Hamish's head was due to be amputated at dawn or thereabouts; but whether there was a blunder in the execution department, or whether Hamish had influential friends on the winning side, the fact remains that he got off with transportation for life to the plantations in Virginia, and was duly towed across the pond with a cargo of lucky ones like himself.

"Now, according to the Squire—for we are still following his version of the story—Dougal stayed at home and lived happy ever after. He didn't know but what Prince Charlie had received the dollars and blued the lot on his unfortunate trip to Scotland, so although he mourned the loss of his share, he sat tight and thought himself well out of it all at the price.

"It seems there was only one person who knew that this treasure still existed intact, and he was a confidential Flemish servant who had been mixed up with Hamish in all his plottings. When his master was caught out, he succeeded in escaping from the country. For years after, he intended to return to Scotland and hunt up the oof, but something always prevented him. Besides, he had only a very vague idea of where Hamish had planted the stuff.

"As he grew old, his conscience began to trouble him, I suppose. Anyhow he wrote to Dougal Tanish, and told him all he knew of the treasure, which wasn't much, except that he knew the dollars had been planted and never recovered.

"The Squire didn't know if

his ancestor had ever been able to read this letter. It was written in Flemish, and he himself discovered it by chance while hunting through a lot of old papers. He happened to have a Belgian lady at Hopeton who was able to translate the letter for him, and then the old boy started hunting round every likely spot in the neighbourhood, hoping to light on the dollars by chance.

"Of course he failed. But being a determined old boy, he began to think of other ways of hitting on the dibs, and the only possible chance lay in hunting out Hamish's descendants in the States, and finding out if they had any papers or traditions on the subject. Hence the cousinly visit to yours truly."

I had listened with great interest to Morgan's narrative, which explained so much that had been dark to me. I felt sure that his story was true in the main, though it might be coloured to suit his own interests.

"Surely Tanish did not put the real object of his visit quite so plainly after at first pretending that he was on a mere pleasure tour," I commented, as Morgan paused in his story.

"No, he is too wily an old bird for that. The story, as I have told it to you, came out in bits, now and again, generally after Marigold had hopped off to bed and we were having a nightcap together. Then gradually he began to wonder if my side of the family had not left any records. He told me he was going to write a history of the family, and that a section on the American branch would complete it nicely. The treasure part of the story only came out when he found he couldn't get me interested in the family records otherwise. I was sure all along that he had something more than the history of the family up his sleeve, so I pretended to take little interest, and at last he was compelled to put down his best trump."

"From what you said at the start," I said, "I gather that the story you have told me is not strictly accurate?"

"No, it is not. The main part of the yarn is gospel truth; but on one particular point it runs off the lines just about as far as it could. The Squire was taking no chances that he could avoid, but then neither was I. We now come to my side of the story. I've my records here in my grip."

Morgan went to the neighbouring bedroom, and returned carrying a small black bag.

CHAPTER XIV.

Morgan placed the bag upon the table, opened it, and took out a large envelope.

"I've got my side of the story here," he said with his usual innocent smile. "Dear, dear, dear! It's sad to think that a hearty old boy like the

Squire should be such a double-dealing rogue—especially when he has a daughter like Marigold!"

"I have only your word for it that he is a rogue, remember. And I have his that you are one, for that matter," I added sharply, for I had no intention of being false to the salt I ate.

Morgan smiled, but showed no trace of embarrassment.

"Well, well," he said with a sigh, "slinging names around don't help things for'ard. Documentary evidence is the sure test. Tanish must have gone to some trouble picking up my trail. Our family came from way down in Virginia, and my mother was the last of the bunch. Her two brothers were both killed in the war, fighting under Lee, and she was left a mere kiddy with nobody but an old black mammy to look after her. Some kind neighbours took her in and brought her up, and when she grew to long frocks she up and married a Northerner from New York State—no doubt to the great horror of her foster-parents. Anyhow, she stuck to the family papers good and safe, and handed them over to me before she died, poor lady.

"These same papers were stowed away for years at the back of an old writing-desk, and I had all but forgotten them when along comes Squire with his family history. I lay low, as I've told you, and learnt all I could, but I took no great interest until he out with the story of the treasure. That set me raking out the lumber in the writing-desk, but I chose midnight to do it, when my affectionate relative was safe in the land of nod.

"I found the story of my great-great-grandfather Hamish's life wrote out in his own hand, and a pesky hard hand it was to decipher, as you can see for yourself."

Morgan drew some sheets from the envelope and handed them to me. They were yellow and worn with age, and the ink was faded to a yellow brown, which was almost illegible, apart from the crabbedness of the handwriting.

"Has Laird Tanish seen this?" I asked, as I glanced through the pages, without being able to read more than a stray word.

"Sure!" replied Morgan, chuckling as though at some joke of his own. "I guess he has read very little of it, though. He hadn't time. However, I'll tell you about that in its place. I fished out this paper, then, and spent the best part of the night wrestling with it. I found that the story was pretty much as the Squire had told it, except for one thing. Hamish, my ancestor, was the *elder* brother, and Dougal, his ancestor, the younger. That put rather a different complexion on things! It was Hamish himself who scraped together the dollars, sold what he could of the family estates, and raised money on the rest. Dougal took no hand in the rising at all. He simply lay doggo, saying nuffin.

"There is a passage in the

paper you hold in your hand—which, by the way, is practically the old boy's last will and testament—saying that as there seemed no hope of either himself or his children ever returning to claim what he calls his 'just inheritance,' he relinquishes all his rights in Hopeton to his younger brother Dougal and to his heirs for ever. Let me find it for you."

Morgan took the time-worn papers and ran his finger down the pages.

"There it is—look," he said, pointing to the passage. "But look further on. 'With the sole exception of the treasure that I gathered together for my rightful but unfortunate King—Charles Stewart—and which I have put in a place of security to be hereinafter set forth. This treasure I will and bequeath unto my children, Hamish and Charles, to be theirs equally between them, or failing them, unto their heirs at such time as it pleases God that the treasure may be discovered.'

"That's plain enough, eh, Seaton? Yet that aged relative comes along and pitches me a yarn wholly contrary! He's some liar, is our friend the Squire!"

"How do you know?" I demanded. "He may have believed all he told you. Why should you be so certain that he was deliberately deceiving you?"

"Dear, dear, you are a one to stick up for the hand that feeds you, Seaton! If I had no other reason to be sure he was deceiving me from the start, I have seen enough of his tricks since to know that if he wants anything there is nothing on earth that he'll stick at. Just you wait until you've heard the whole story.

"I tackled the Squire next day on this very point. I suggested that he might have made a mistake, and that my branch of the family was the elder. It was the first time I saw him in a rage. Up till then he had been as amiable and gentle as a boarding-school miss, but now I saw the other side of the picture. The very way he stormed was enough to show that he was bluffing out a bad lie.

"Now I can't tell you this yarn, Seaton, without bringing in a love interest. God knows I don't want to spread myself on the subject of Marigold, but the story can't go on and leave her out. By this time I was fair crazy on the girl, and she and I had great times together. I don't want to boast, but I honestly believe she was growing to like me some, and in time I might have made her like me more, but just in the doubtful days when she could be turned either to hate me or the other thing I made a stummer, and it was hate for mine.

"When the Squire simmered down a bit I put a proposition to him. It wasn't meant for a downright bargain, but he took it as such.

"'After all,' I said to him, 'What does it matter which of these two mutts was born first. They've both been underground a good long hundred

years, and there's no need to rake up old scores. Surely we can settle all this friendly-like. Suppose, now, that Marigold and myself could fix up a match, what's to prevent the two branches of the family becoming one? Then, if there's any treasure to share, we can all share alike.'

"The Squire tramped up and down my best carpet totting up the ayes and noes. Evidently the ayes had it, for at last he stopped opposite me and says—

"'A very good suggestion, Morgan. The best way out of the difficulty. Let me see the manuscript.'

"'Not so fast, cousin,' I answered, or words to that effect. 'It's a long way yet to the wedding ceremony.'

"Then, of course, another storm broke. Did I think he was a swindler, or that his daughter would not carry out his wishes?—and a lot more of that kind of tosh. I just had to let him run dry, but I stuck to the papers like glue.

"Now it was no intention of mine, Seaton, to make a bargain with the Squire for his daughter's hand, but the silly old ass took me up that way, and off he set to make Marigold agree. Then the fat was in the fire. Of course she wouldn't hear of it, being a fine high-spirited girl. The things she called me! Why, it was an education to me. Dear, dear! What a girl she is. The real Tanish stock without a doubt!

"It was a most exciting chat we had. She never gave me a chance to explain, but asked me if I mistook her for a cow, or some such domestic animal, to be bargained for without her having a say in it at all. I tell you, Seaton, she had some say! Then the old man went for *her*, because she would not obey his wishes; and finally, just to round the affair off neatly, *I* went for *him* hot and strong, for giving Marigold a false idea of me.

"Marigold wanted to leave my house at once—that very day—but the Squire wouldn't hear of it. He still had hopes of coming to terms with me, I suppose, and in any case he was determined to have the key to the treasure by hook or by crook."

"Then you actually have a key to this treasure?" I asked, for so far Morgan had not definitely said so.

"Sure!" he replied promptly. "You shall see it by-and-by! I mean to be absolutely open with you. I'm out to lay every card on the table.

"Well, they stayed one more night in my house, much to Marigold's disgust. She never spoke a word to me at meals, and kept out of my way between them. She went off to bed as early as possible, and for the rest of the evening the Squire made every effort he knew how to get the key to the treasure out of me. He argued first and bullied afterwards, and finally he came down to trying to make a deal. He offered me a quarter, and then a third, then a half, and by midnight he had promised I should have two-thirds

of the boodle if only I'd let him in.

"Well, I reckoned he hadn't treated me straight, Seaton, and I'd made up my mind he should pay for his crookedness, so not a word would I say to help him. Mind you, that treasure belongs to me by right! He hasn't the vestige of a claim on it, but if he'd come straight and slung out the facts, I guess I'd have let him in on the ground floor.

"When he went off to bed he was roaring and cussing like a man in his prime. I couldn't sleep for thinking how I'd been let down over Marigold; and I dessay I put in a fair record myself for cussing in the course of the night. I rose early, meaning to go out and walk off my troubles; but as I passed the door of my den I noticed that the top of my desk was open. I knew I had closed it before I went off to roost, so I went in to investigate. The lock was broken, and it didn't take me the wink of a gnat's eyebrow to discover that old Father Hamish's last words had taken wings.

"I stood still looking at the old desk and thinking things out. I didn't waste much grey matter fixing on the thief—it wanted no giddy Sherlock for that part of the job—but I was puzzling on the best way to set about getting my paper back. It didn't take me very long to decide that the straightforward way was the best, so back I went upstairs again.

"I walked straight to the door of the Squire's room, opened it, and went in. It was like the bull-headedness of the old boy not to worry about locking the door behind him. He'd got what he wanted, and he never even thought of putting himself safe. That's the Squire all over. He don't care a damn for anything so long as he gets what he wants.

"Well, I walked straight in, and there he was sitting by the window in a gorgeous dressing-gown, busy copying out the key to the treasure. I didn't waste any time chin-wagging. Before he had quite grasped the glad news that I was on his trail, I grabbed the papers off his dressing-table, taking care to get the copy he was making as well as the original.

"I thought he'd have had a fit. He didn't show any false modesty about being caught in the act. Not he! It was just pure rage, such as you would expect a man to show if you sneaked his own goods from under his nose. He sprang at me like a young 'un, and we rolled over on the floor wrapped in each other's arms. I'd got the papers stowed away in my inside coat-pocket, and I had enough wind left in me to keep him off them.

"Right into the middle of the riot strolled Marigold, looking lovely with her dark hair hanging down in waves, and a pale blue embroidered dressing-gown wrapped round her. Oh, I don't miss much that's going, Seaton; you can bet on that!

"'Father! Mr Morgan!' she said, looking in astonish-

ment at us two wriggling on the floor.

"We got on our feet as quick as light, and, judging by the Squire, we looked about as guilty as a couple of little boys caught stealing apples.

"'What is the meaning of this exhibition?' asked Marigold, looking from one to the other of us.

"I stammered out some tosh about how I was showing her old man some exercises for the good of his liver, but it didn't sound convincing even to myself. Marigold wasn't taking any of it.

"'I want the truth!' she demanded, mighty sharp.

"'The truth is,' bellowed the Squire, who was getting his wind back—'the truth is that this man we have treated as a friend and a relation is a rogue and a thief. Get your things packed. We leave his house at once!'

"Pretty good, that, from the man who had broken into my desk in the small hours of the night, and who was trying to do me out of a fortune! However, I said nothing. It couldn't do any good, and the girl was his daughter.

"They left that morning. It was only chance that put us both aboard the same boat coming over. You know what happened there! The Squire, being the determined old boy he is, was certain to have another bid for my papers, but he hadn't an earthly. They were under my pillow every night. Things were getting warm when I found we were booked to share a cabin. If you hadn't happened along and done me a real favour, I don't know how things would have panned out."

"I take it, then, that having the key, you set out at once to recover the treasure before Tanish had time to search further?" I asked.

"That's about it," agreed Morgan.

"Then why have you kept away from here so long?" I asked with some surprise.

"Look at that, and you will see what has delayed me," and with that he placed before me the strangest document I have ever seen.

CHAPTER XV.

"That," declared Morgan, beaming at me through his spectacles, "is the key to the Hopeton treasure!"

I looked long and carefully at the single sheet of paper that he placed before me. It was yellow and worn with age, and the ink upon it was faded and brown. Here was no straightforward paper of directions. It was either a hoax or a cipher—and a cipher which would not be solved by any of the known rules, for in place of the letters or numbers that are usually found in such things, there was a series of rude diagrams sprawling over the paper. Underneath these queer hiero-

glyphics the following words were written:—

"Hamish Tanish bequeaths the Hopeton treasure to him amongst his descendants who has the wit to seek it out. Follow the little pictures."

I gazed intently at the paper for some time, but as I could make neither head nor tail of it, I looked up inquiringly, to find Morgan's eyes resting upon me with a quizzical expression.

"Well, what do you make of it?" he asked, with a smile.

"Nothing!" I replied. "I suppose it is a cipher?"

"I suppose it is," agreed Morgan.

"Then you don't understand it yourself?" I asked in surprise.

He shook his head.

"I've followed the little pictures until I'm tired," he said. "I could draw you a faithful copy of the whole thing without once looking at it, but as to what it means—I'm flummoxed."

"I suppose there is no chance of it being a hoax?" I suggested.

"It's genuine enough. It was attached to the end of Father Hamish's story, and I pointed out to you in his manuscript a reference to this. Here it is. 'The treasure which I have put in a place of security to be hereinafter set forth.' This cipher is the 'hereinafter set forth,' but it beats me."

"You said that this would explain why you have been so long in coming North. How is that?" I asked.

"Well, you see, after I'd given up hope of solving the thing myself, I decided to put it into the hands of an expert. I've tried 'em all—all that I could find, at least. Handwriting experts, puzzle-solvers, private detectives—not one of 'em could fake up a decent solution."

"Well, you have at least succeeded in spreading the story of the Hopeton treasure among the very class of people who would have a nose for that sort of thing," I remarked drily.

"I'm not such a mutt as that, Seaton," replied Morgan. "They never saw the original with Hamish's remarks about the treasure underneath. I drew up copies, showing the pictures by themselves, and let them butt against that."

"Even then," I argued, "if one of these chaps did solve the thing, what was to prevent him keeping the solution to himself, and hunting out the treasure at his ease?"

"That sounds a deal more plausible than it is," replied Morgan. "Suppose we knew what was in this cipher, I don't suppose we'd find a full list of directions, so that we could walk straight along and realise the dollars. We'd more likely get some hints or landmarks or such-like, which we would have to use along with the data in Hamish's story. If one of these guys had solved the thing, the chances are it would mean nothing to him."

"Perhaps you are right," I said. "Still, it was fairly

dangerous. Have you given up all hope of finding the treasure, then?"

"I guess not. That brings us back to where we started off. Are you still determined that you won't lend a hand to help me with Marigold?"

"My position is difficult," I said thoughtfully. "A great deal depends upon what you want me to do."

"If only I could convince you that I am on the straight, Seaton, we'd get on a darned sight faster. I treated the Squire straight all through. I've told you my story as straight as a die, and I'll prove to you now that I'm going to play straight with Marigold and her respected dad right to the finish. Look here—here's a couple of copies of the cipher." He drew them from his pocket as he spoke.

"I want you to take one of them to Marigold, and tell her all you know about it. She may show it to her father or not, as she chooses. Tell her that I would like to meet her and talk to her about it, but that if she'd rather not see me I'll keep out of her way—for the present. That's all I ask of you, Seaton.

"This other copy I mean to give to my other cousin at Blackdykes, where I'm going to stay for a bit."

"Going to stay at Blackdykes?" I exclaimed, quite taken aback by this latest development.

"Why not?" asked Morgan. He looked at me in innocent surprise. "I've been out to see Roy Tanish and his wife. They treated me real kind, and asked me to come and stop at the farm. I'm going out there to-night."

Here was a complication! I wondered how much Morgan knew of the relations between Blackdykes and Hopeton. I made a sudden resolution. Morgan had told me the whole of his story—I believed truly. I would tell him what I knew. It could do no harm that I could see.

"Look here, Morgan," I said. "What do you know of Roy and his wife?"

"Nothing," he answered. "I got here yesterday, and inquired into things. The landlord told me that the Squire's son lived at Blackdykes, and as he was the only one of the family with whom I hadn't had a row, I thought I'd better call. They received me most politely when I told them who I was."

"Did you speak of the treasure?" I asked.

"Not a word," answered Morgan. "It was the lady who invited me to bring my trunk and nail it to the floor—a handsome woman, but not my style. Too gloomy and tombstoney for my taste."

"I'm going to tell you all I know of Roy and his wife, Morgan," I said. "I think you are walking into trouble by going there. If you don't find trouble for yourself, you are going to make it for others."

With that I told him the story of the feud between Roy and his father, and the cause of it all. Morgan listened intently while I spoke, his eyes

looking round and innocent through his glasses. I told him of the Flemish document, and how Roy's wife had stolen it in the absence of the Laird. I told him, also, that I believed, from what I had seen myself, that Roy knew nothing about this, and, as far as I could discover, had no knowledge of the treasure whatever. The fact that I had found the paper in his wife's possession, and that he was quite ignorant of its significance, seemed to show that she was playing a lone hand.

"A bit of a dark horse, is Mrs Roy," said Morgan, as I concluded. "Well, Seaton, we've cleared the air a bit with our stories, and I don't think you'd have told me yours if you hadn't begun to trust me a bit more. What am I to do now? If I go to Blackdykes, the Squire will take it that I'm in league against him, and I want to conciliate the old scoundrel for the sake of Marigold."

As I was about to reply, I heard a voice in which I could not be mistaken. Sure enough the door opened a moment afterwards and Betty Forbes walked into the room, bringing with her an atmosphere of colour and beauty. Her rich hair flamed as it caught the evening sunlight—there was a flush of heightened colour in her face—and from her brown eyes there sparkled a new excitement.

"Still here, Bob," she exclaimed as she entered. "I thought I might catch you. Please excuse this intrusion Mr Morgan. It is important that I should speak to Dr Seaton as quickly as possible."

"That's all right, young lady," said Morgan, beaming upon Betty so amiably that one could almost imagine that his spectacles were radiating light; "I'll leave you to have it out with him," and he made as if to go out of the room.

"Just a moment, Morgan," I said, putting my hand upon his shoulder. "Has what you have to say got anything to do with the Tanishes, Betty?"

"Yes, it's about the Laird—and Marie!" replied Betty.

"Then I don't think Mr Morgan need go. He had better hear all there is to hear on that subject."

"Aha!" exclaimed Betty. "I see you have come round to my view of Mr Morgan."

"I hope your view was a favourable one, Miss Forbes," said Morgan earnestly.

"I only said that you *look* honest," answered Betty. "But I don't claim to be a judge of character."

Her eyes twinkled merrily as she paid him this rather dubious compliment. Morgan bowed deeply, as though overcome by her good opinion.

"Now my news," Betty went on. "You know, before you left, Bob, I said that I'd call upon Marie Tanish again at Blackdykes. A few minutes later the Dad came in, and as the pony had done very little work to-day, I thought I might just as well go at once. I left the trap at the end of the farm road and walked up to the house. As I got no answer to my knock, I wandered round to

the garden at the back, thinking that probably Marie was out amongst the flowers.

"Of course I know—everybody in the district knows—the kind of terms that Roy and his father are on, so I was naturally astonished to hear the voice of the Monster of the Glen in the garden—and not raised in wrath either!"

"The Laird at Blackdykes!" I exclaimed. "There's going to be trouble!"

"That is what I am afraid of—if Roy comes home," agreed Betty. "You know that I dislike meeting the Laird. When I heard that he was there, I stopped for a moment to think what I should do. I had no intention of eavesdropping, but I overheard a few words which showed me that the Monster and Marie are quite friendly again. What I heard was something like this—

"'And you swear that Roy knows nothing of this?' That was the voice of the Monster.

"'I have told him nothing. He has never seen the paper,' Marie answered. I can't imitate her broken English properly.

"'That's a bargain, then,' said the Laird.

"'I shall keep it,' replied Marie. 'But you must keep away from here. If Roy saw you——'

"That is all I heard. I thought it was best to clear off and tell you, because if Roy should find his father at Blackdykes, goodness knows what might happen. Marigold has told me all that happened after her return with her father from America, and I know the tempers of both men. You have a lot of influence with the Laird, Bob, so I thought it best to see you at once."

"Hang it all, Betty," I protested, "I'm only Duncan's tutor and nurse. I can't go off to Blackdykes and insist on taking the Laird home and putting him to bed."

"I don't think there is anything to be done," declared Morgan. "From what Miss Forbes has told us, I should say the Squire was just about at the end of his interview with Mrs Roy. They had made some bargain. Probably he left soon after."

"I daresay you are right," I agreed, the more willingly as I did not want to be mixed up in the affair.

"Then you think I have been agitating myself about nothing?" said Betty in a disappointed tone.

"On the contrary, it's likely that it will prove a pretty serious business," replied Morgan. "The Squire and Marie are in league for the discovery of the treasure, and Roy is being left in the dark. If ever he finds out anything, blood will flow—at least it would in the States!"

"What do you mean by the treasure?" demanded Betty.

"Seaton will tell you all about it, Miss Forbes. I must get away." Then, turning to me, he continued, "This latest news has decided me. I am going to stay

at Blackdykes. I want to see more of Roy's wife. But I shall say nothing of the cipher. As I told you, I meant that Roy should have a copy, but for the present I shall keep it dark. Tell Marigold as much of my story as you think fit. Give her this copy of the cipher, and see if she can make anything of it. She may show it to her father if she likes. See if you can solve the thing yourself. Miss Forbes here will lend you a hand, and she is a cute one. We're all in the running now, and if any one of us can make good, we'll share the profits."

I took the copy of the cipher, folded it, and put it in my pocket; and as I did so, I thought how Morgan had managed to have his own way again. I had begun this interview with him, determined that he should have no help from me in his schemes, and now I found myself willingly taking his instructions.

"By the way," he resumed, "we must make some arrangement to meet. I can't come to Hopeton at present, and you don't want to be seen at Blackdykes."

"But you can both come to Kilbrennan, and either meet at our house, or leave messages for each other with me," said Betty.

"The very thing," agreed Morgan, and at that we left it.

(To be continued.)

AN AIRMAN'S EXPERIENCES IN EAST AFRICA.

BY LEO WALMSLEY.

XVI. TO NORTHEY.

On my discharge from the base hospital at Daresalam I was ordered by the Squadron to report to the officer in charge of A-Flight at Iringa, a "late" German military post in the Highlands, some 250 miles in from the coast. Two days later I arrived by rail at Dodoma, whence the road ran almost due south to my destination.

The rains were becoming very heavy, and according to the natives all communication with Iringa would be broken down before the end of the week. I left early next morning with two Ford light lorries. The road was practically a canal, and the Ford was the only type of car that could make any headway at all. Thirty miles from Dodoma I had to abandon the idea of proceeding by motor, and ordered the drivers to get back as best they could, transferring my kit and stores to a dozen porters whom I procured from a local village. After three days' hard marching we reached the Ruaha river swamps, where for twelve miles the road lay under a sheet of turgid water averaging 4 feet in depth. Along this "road" was passing a continuous stream of porters, bearing much-needed rations to the troops ahead. These poor natives had to endure terrible hardships. The water softened their otherwise leathery feet, rendering them liable to constant wounds from thorns and sharp roots, and never for one minute while they were in the swamp could they take down the loads of flour or meal from their heads. Many of them were suffering from acute dysentery or malaria, and we passed quite a number of corpses rotting in the water. The bridge over the Ruaha river was said to be in danger of being washed away at any minute, and with the floods steadily rising there was an excellent chance of our being cut off completely and drowned. To add to my miseries, the wet brought on another attack of malaria. However, we staggered on as best we could, crossed the bridge in safety four hours before it was washed away, and by dusk reached dry land. I rested here for a day or two until the fever had abated, and then pushed on once more to Iringa, where I arrived on the evening of the tenth day of my safari.

I reported to Captain Hodgkinson (otherwise "Hodge"), my new Flight-Commander. He was one of the old Henry Farman pilots, and he had participated in many a

lengthy bombing raid behind the enemies' lines. Only two machines were available, B.E.2. Cs. (naval type), with 100 h.p. Rolls-Royce R.A.F. engines, and both these were urgently needed at Njombe, a German post nearly 150 miles farther south, which was now General Northey's headquarters. At present there was no motor road to the place, and all our stores, including bombs and petrol, had to be sent by porters. The only other pilot in the flight was Murray, and he left by air for Njombe on the day following my arrival. He landed safely, but before he had time to carry out a reconnaissance over the German positions within range of Njombe, he was ordered to proceed to Ssongea, the headquarters of one of Northey's columns, 150 miles south of Njombe and fifty miles east of Lake Nyassa. Hodge was now ordered to proceed to Njombe. He left the first fine morning, and arrived without any adventure other than that provided by a few thunderstorms through which he had to fly.

My own orders were to take charge of the Iringa depot and superintend the forwarding of stores. The hangar, by the way, contained one aeroplane minus its starboard top plane. Hodge had wired to Daresalam for a spare plane for this machine, and we had received notification of its despatch. Three weeks later it arrived. It had been carried the whole distance by relays of porters, who pathetically described the journey as a "very bad business." When we came to fit it to the machine it was found to be the wrong size and utterly useless. The porters decided that it had been an even worse business when I told them this. It reminds me of something equally typical of the East African campaign that happened a few months after our arrival in the country. We were urgently in need of spare engines, and several cables had been sent home with the information. One day three mysterious-looking cases, labelled 26th Sq., R.F.C., East Africa, arrived at Bombay. After remaining on the wharf for a week or two, some bright person thought it would be a good idea to put them in a boat leaving for Mombasa. Here they eventually arrived, and a wire announcing this fact was sent to General Headquarters, Nairobi. These good people disclaimed all knowledge of them, and the engines *were re-shipped and sent back to England.*

At last I was overjoyed to receive a message from Hodge: "Report Njombe immediately." The journey took me five days' solid marching, averaging twenty-five miles a day. Njombe is something like 6500 feet above sea-level, and the rolling grassy hills of surrounding country remind one very much of Salisbury Plain.

The aerodrome had been prepared on the summit of one of these hills, three miles east of the German fort, and a colder and more bleak position could not have been chosen. We had no tents, but large

grass huts or *bandas* had been prepared, which, with several additional loads of grass, proved to be quite comfortable. In our mess banda, however, we had to keep alight a roaring fire, for the cold, particularly in the morning, was intense, or at least it appeared so to us.

A certain force of the enemy was reported to be holding a position on the Pitu river, a sub-tributary of the Rufiji; and the General was anxious that we should confirm this report at the first opportunity. Unfortunately the rains prevented all flying after 3 P.M., and in the early morning the ground was usually hidden by a heavy mist. However, a chance came by the end of the week, and one morning about nine we set out. The view from a height of 600 feet was magnificent. As far as the eye could see stretched the rolling grass-clad hills, intersected with brightly glistening streams, which here and there tossed themselves over cliffs and precipices in feathery cascades. To the west the ragged blue Livingstone Mountains hid from view the waters of Lake Nyassa. My soul yearned passionately for just one little glimpse of this magic inland sea, but my yearning was not to be gratified for many weeks. We followed the wide motor road until we reached Lupembe, a mission-station twenty-five miles east of Njombe.

Lupembe marks the eastern extremity of the vast tableland that occupies nearly the whole of Central Africa, and from this point the land slopes down in a great escarpment to the coastal plains. The grassland now gave place to wild and primitive forest, through which, just here and there, we could catch a glimpse of raging mountain torrents and the gleam of foaming waterfalls. At the foot of the escarpment flows the Ruhudje river, one of the great tributaries of the Rufiji, and into which runs the Pitu river. Our map was simply atrocious, but we were enabled to identify the river by information that had been given to us by Captain Sutherland, a well-known East African explorer, who was then attached to Northey's Staff. Although our altimeter was registering a height of only 2000 feet, the difference in altitude between this part of the country and our aerodrome was 4000 feet, which gave us a net height over the ground of 6000 feet. This, for observation purposes, was too much, so I asked Hodge to come down. When he opened the throttle once more we had lost 3000 feet, and we were thus flying below the level of our own aerodrome—quite a unique experience. There was no difficulty now in spotting the enemy's camps—one near the Pitu, and two more close to the Ruhudje; and there was no doubt about their being occupied, for hardly had we got over the first than a shell burst about 800 feet below. We had no bombs, but we had something almost as useful—thirty-six rifle grenades,

carried in a special frame that had been invented by a R.N.A.S. pilot. We did not use them at once, but waited until the Huns had decided that we were on a peaceful reconnaissance. Meanwhile I busied myself with my sketching-block and note-book. At last Hodge decided that the psychological moment had come, and he commenced operations. With strict fairness he dropped twelve grenades at each camp, and we watched them burst among the grass huts with an enthusiasm that I am sure was hardly shared by the Huns below. Our job finished, the machine was pointed homewards — and then we were shocked to see that the escarpment or cliff down which we had flown was now almost hidden in a dense black mass of thunder-cloud, which even as we looked was ripped from top to bottom by a lurid flash of lightning: *the way home was blocked.* Our predicament at first glance seemed a hopeless one. Below was swamp and flooded veldt, through which the main stream of the Ruhudje only here and there showed its individuality as it curved its weary way to the north-east to join the Rufiji. To the west the land rose rapidly in a series of forest-clad ridges, until it was lost in the deluge of rain that poured down from the cloud-pall above. Our only possible hope of salvation lay in our being able to fly *over* the storm. This would depend upon the climbing powers of the machine, which in this part of the world were not great; but we had lost a considerable weight in bombs and petrol, and Hodge "shoved her nose up" almost to stalling-point. At the end of half an hour the altimeter was registering 3000 feet (*i.e.*, 7000 feet above the ground immediately below), and we were just level with the top of the cloud. Setting a compass-bearing for Njombe, we flew straight towards the escarpment. Looking back, I had a last glimpse of the Ruhudje valley, where three tall columns of brown smoke marked the positions of the camps we had just bombed, and then, as we reached the cloud, the ground was blocked from view. It would have been distinctly cheering for the Huns, I thought, if only they had known how, in ten minutes, the tables had been turned. In spite of our great height we were now hardly more than 100 feet from the surface of the cloud, which spread like an endless virgin snow-field as far as the eye could see. Above, the sun shone brightly from an azure sky, and it was difficult to realise that only 1000 feet below the thunder was crashing and the rain falling in swirling torrents on to the mountain-side. Engine failure now would have meant—well, one dare not contemplate it. We pushed on with a dull sort of numbness gripping our hearts, for we knew that if the storm reached as far back as

our camp—and experience told us that this was highly probable—our fate was sealed. In half an hour there was not the slightest sign of the end of it, but fifteen minutes later we sighted a mountain peak, basking in the sunshine, and looking like some wonderful fairy island floating on a sea of snow. This told us that at any rate our direction was right, but it showed also that the cloud-bank *did* extend over the camp. Was there clear air between it and the ground? If so, we were safe; if not, there was every chance that we should fly into a hillside or something equally unsympathetic. Another quarter of an hour passed like a year in jail. Our eyes were aching with the dazzling whiteness of the unending "snow-field." By this time we must be somewhere near home if our compass was accurate. "For God's sake put an end to it, Hodge!" I bawled. "We'll give it another ten minutes," I heard him reply, but even as he spoke the engine stopped dead—*the petrol had given out!* A strange uncanny silence followed, relieved only by the whistling of the air between the struts as we commenced to glide earthwards. In less than a minute we entered the cloud; immediately everything became pitch dark and the rain started to batter like hail on the planes and the wind screen. We were bumped, too, as though we were caught in the vortex of a great aerial whirlpool, and the dismal shrieking of the struts and wires sounded like the voices of sirens following down in an ecstasy of glee to witness the ghastly death that waited us below. We should know our fate soon, I thought. After all, it would be a quick death, far better than dying of dysentery or sleeping sickness. I wondered how long it would be before they found us: would the vultures—a terrific bump almost threw me out of the machine; grasping hold of a strut, I looked overboard, searching the darkness below for some gleam of light. It was even too dark to see the instruments, and it was hardly possible to tell whether we were side-slipping or even flying the right way up. My heart turned cold as I looked at the luminous dial of my watch—we had been gliding three minutes. All hope was gone now; another minute—and then suddenly came a lightish patch a hundred feet below: it was a gap in the cloud that, as our eyes strained towards it, suddenly opened, and revealed a carpet of green in the centre of which was a very familiar object—our hangar. *The petrol had given out immediately above the aerodrome!* Had it given out one minute before, or one minute later, we should have crashed, for a certainty. As we glided gently down I undid my flying cap, and taking out a little gollywog that had rested therein for many moons, kissed it affectionately.

"What do you think of that for a bit of fine cross-country flying?" said Hodge as we climbed out.

"Garn!" I said, "'Twas this mascot of mine that did the trick!"

It is good to feel the firm earth beneath one's feet after an adventure like this. That night I dreamed I was dead, and the penance for my sins was that I had to gaze at a sheet of white paper for eternity.

XVII. THE HUNT FOR MAJOR WINTGENS.

The rains now became so heavy that nearly a fortnight passed without any flying at all.

As soon as the weather cleared we made several reconnaissances over the Pitu positions, but each time we had great difficulty in getting through the cloud-banks that seem to hang over all elevated districts of East Africa during the rainy season. A day or two later the Intelligence people reported that a very strong German force under the command of Major Wintgens, that had broken through our lines near Lake Nyassa some weeks before, was now in the neighbourhood of Lake Rukwa, a swampy sheet of water 150 miles N.W. of Njombe. To reach this place by air would mean a flight of at least 5 hours, and unfortunately our machine had only sufficient petrol carrying capacity to permit of a maximum flight of 4½ hours. By carrying extra petrol, however, and replenishing the tank during the trip, it might be possible, and the need for a reconnaissance was so urgent that it was decided to make the attempt. This method had been successfully employed before by two R.N.A.S. airmen, and on the first fine morning we set out on our hunt for Major Wintgens, feeling very confident. I carried two extra tins of petrol in my cockpit, and it was arranged that I should fill up the tank as soon as the engine had consumed an equivalent amount (viz., 4 gallons). For the first hour we flew over the great rolling Ubena plain, and then we reached the wild and rocky escarpment of the Piroto Mountains which form the northern continuation of the Livingstones. Here I was pleased to receive a signal from Hodge to empty my tins, for, packed as they were between my legs in the tiny cockpit, I had not been able to stir an inch since climbing in.

In this type of machine the main tank actually forms the observer's seat, and it is filled by means of an orifice situated immediately between his legs. To empty my first tin, then, I had first of all to remove the stopper of the tank, invert the tin so that its nozzle came immediately above the orifice, and then remove the screw-cap. After a severe struggle, during which I experienced an extremely painful attack of cramp, I manœuvred my tin into position and unscrewed the cap. Immediately there came an overpowering smell

of petrol and a horrible gurgling sound, and then with a gasp of terror I saw that the spirit was not entering the tank, but spilling over the sides on to the floor of the nacelle, and running out almost on to the red-hot exhaust pipes, which in this machine were carried down each side of the fuselage as far as the pilot's seat.

"What the blank, blank, blank are you doing?" I heard Hodge yell, as, throttling back the engine, he pushed the nose of the machine down to cool the pipes. With feverish fingers I tried to replace the cap on the tin, and in order to keep the petrol from shooting outwards I turned it in towards my body. With both legs now twisted almost double with cramp, with that beastly liquid soaking through my thick clothing on to the flesh, and Hodge swearing like a trooper behind, while I expected each second to see the machine leap into flames, it may be imagined that I was feeling very unhappy. Suddenly, however, there flashed across my mind the memory of a certain comic American film in which the hero, heroine, and a few other characters are seen trying to stop a burst water-main by sitting on the hole, and the similarity between that and the present situation struck me as being so remarkable that I could not help but laugh. Hodge apparently did not see the joke, and I will admit that even for me it seemed to wear slightly thin when, a minute or two after I had successfully stoppered the tin, I began to feel an intense burning sensation all over the lower portions of my anatomy. The petrol was evaporating so rapidly that, becoming a freezing mixture, it was drawing all the heat of the body to the areas above mentioned, producing a severe form of frost-bite. Soon I lost all desire to remain in a sitting position, and a great longing for home came over me. As it was now hopeless to attempt to complete the reconnaissance, Hodge put the machine about, and ninety minutes later we landed safely. It was then found that before pouring in the petrol I should have removed a wire-gauze filter, which because of its fineness had not allowed the spirit to flow in quickly enough.

As Wintgens was still supposed to be in the neighbourhood of Lake Rukwa, next day we set out again. The mechanics had removed the filter, and also they had replaced the ordinary stopper of each petrol tin with a piece of inner cycle tubing, about twelve inches long, which would act as a spout. The extremities of these spouts were tied up with string, and my instructions were to untie the string of the can I was using, place the spout inside the orifice of the tank, and then invert the tin. A very interesting thing happened, however, when we got our height. The petrol gas expanded with the decrease in atmospheric pressure, and the cycle tubing

was blown up like a sausage balloon. But this did not interfere with the filling process, which was carried out successfully soon after we had rounded the western spur of the Piroto Mountain. It was very dismal country that we had to reconnoitre, clad almost without break in dense bush, and entirely uninhabited except in the immediate vicinity of Lake Rukwa and the Ruaha river. Although we scoured the whole district from a height of 500 feet, the only sign of the enemy that we saw was a small village that he had set on fire, evidently out of sheer wantonness. The Germans invariably burned or otherwise destroyed all crops in the districts through which they passed, and I heard later that on this occasion they had also ham-strung all the able-bodied natives, so that we could not use them as porters. Major Wintgens was one of the cleverest of Von Lettow's officers, and this "break-back" of his had certainly been a brilliant achievement, although with the number of troops General Northey had at his disposal it was impossible to prevent such a thing happening again and again.

It would have been a distinct triumph for us had we found him; but it was written otherwise, and we returned home feeling very disgusted in spite of the fact that we had put up what was then the record duration flight for the country —5 hours 9 minutes. Later we learned that the Intelligence Officer at Iringa, in giving his report, had made a mistake in the map reference, the place we had reconnoitred being nearly 100 miles west of the area in which Wintgens had been last seen. We invited this officer to dine with us, but he did not come.

XVIII. LAKE NYASSA AND BEYOND.

We were now completely cut off from the Northern Army and our squadron except by telegraph, and it was thus impossible to obtain further stores of aviation petrol and bombs. M.T. petrol, however, seemed to work quite well after it had been strained through chamois leather several times; and the local R.E.'s, under the command of Major Clarke, the brilliant engineer who had been responsible for the construction of Northey's splendid motor roads, designed a most terrible infernal machine, which worked even better than the familiar Hales. These bombs were made from ordinary petrol tins, dynamite being used instead of T.N.T., and the space between the explosive and the outer casing was filled with stones, iron nuts, nails, and any nasty-looking bits of metal that could be found in the workshops of the Mechanical Transport Department. There was

no safety device, of course, and a forced landing with a bomb like this under the planes would have been a risky business. It may be imagined that we always found a target of some description whenever we set out with a Clarke's bomb.

Information had been received by the General Staff that a large force of Huns had crossed the Rovuma river into Portuguese territory, and that they were marching south so rapidly that it looked almost as though their plan was to invade Nyassaland and cut Northey's lines of communication. Also it was thought that their object might be to stir up rebellion among a certain tribe of natives, who in times past had been badly treated by the Portuguese. Things looked very serious indeed, and the General decided to move at once into Nyassaland. Hodge and I were overjoyed to hear that we were to join him there as soon as possible, but when we came to look at the map our optimism faded somewhat, for to make the complete journey to Fort Johnston in one flight was quite out of the question, particularly so as the prevalent wind on Lake Nyassa at this time of the year is almost due south. An aerodrome, however, had been prepared some time ago at Weidhaven, a small German settlement on the lake-side, 100 miles from Njombe and practically due west of Ssongea. Hodge decided that he would fly to this place with Corporal Walker in the observer's seat, dismantle the machine, and load it on one of the tiny Lake steamers sailing south to Fort Johnston. The plan was approved by the Staff, and I was ordered to proceed with the whole personnel and stores of the Flight by road to Alt Langenberg, a little port at the northern extremity of the Lake, whence the main pass leads through the Livingstone Mountains to Njombe, and where we should be able to embark on the same boat that would call for Hodge at Weidhaven.

This was the last link in my great safari across German East Africa, and although it was in many ways the most difficult, it was easily the most interesting. From Njombe the pass winds through the highest and the ruggedest part of the stupendous Livingstone Mountains, now coiling lazily up the slopes of some massive mountain dome, now diving abruptly into a dark sunless valley, zigzagging up great awesome cliffs, skirting the edge of sickening precipices, until at last it emerges on to a narrow forest-clad platform 8000 feet above sea-level, and from which the traveller obtains his first dramatic glimpse of the lake.

To me it seemed that Dark Africa had deigned to reveal one of its rarest and most highly-treasured secrets when, after two hard days' climbing among those terrible cliffs and crags, I suddenly became aware that the soft blue waters of this most magic of all lakes lay at my feet. It was early after-

noon, and not even an errant cat's-paw disturbed the polished surface. Little rounded puffs of cloud hung limp in the air, and the azure of the sky was paled by an opalescent film of haze through which, far away to the west across the lake, one could see dimly the blue hills of Northern Nyassaland and Rhodesia. Great rugged mountains, dark and forbidding, like giant warriors guarding a sleeping princess, fringed the lake on either side, and stretched as far as the eye could see to the south, where, in the horizon, land, water, and sky gradually lost individuality and were blended into a pearly-hued nothingness.

We camped in the mountains at 7500 feet above sea-level, and when we started on the last stage of the journey early next morning, all the little waterfalls alongside the path were gaily decked with icicles. Late in the evening of the same day we scrambled down the last cliff on to the tiny delta on which the settlement and military part of Old Langenberg has been built, and my thermometer was then registering 102 degrees in the shade.

All our supplies of petrol had been carried to Njombe through the pass by porters, and it may be imagined that from the niggers' point of view it was not the kind of trip they would make for pure pleasure.

As a matter of fact, these poor devils had protested very strongly, not just because of the actual work, but because they did not see why they should wear out their bodies carrying great heavy tins of *water* from Nyassa to Njombe, when there was already at the latter place an excellent supply of this desirable liquid. The water they had to carry was not even good, it did not smell right, and it did not slake the thirst—they had tried some. Apparently, one particularly trying day things came to a climax, and there can be no doubt that the whole convoy would have "downed tins" and deserted had it not been for a brilliant suggestion made by one of their number. Briefly it was this. A mile or so from Njombe there was a small stream containing excellent water. Why should they not empty their tins on the mountain-side, climb the pass with light loads and lighter hearts, and then fill them up again just before they arrived at their destination? The white man in charge of the convoy was sick, so who would be any the wiser, while all would feel very much the happier. The idea was hailed with acclamation; the petrol was emptied over the cliffs, and according to plan the tins were refilled at the stream. Carrying their loads into the depot some time later, with a magnificently assumed air of innocence, they enlarged on the trials of the journey, shedding tears as they described the climb up from the lake in the scorching sun, the roughness of the road, and the weight of the tins.

It was not until we came to fill the tanks of the machine that

the trick was discovered, and the tears that were shed then by those identical niggers were sufficient to turn Lake Nyassa salt.

We sailed from Alt Langenberg on the morning following the day of my arrival, in H.M.S. *Gwendoline*, a smart little gunboat which had taken an active part in several engagements during the earlier days of the war, and thirty-six hours later we made Weidhaven.

I was delighted to see that the machine had arrived and that it was already partially dismantled, but such a heavy swell was rolling into the shore that it looked as though the loading of it would be a difficult business. So it proved. Time after time the steel lighter in which the various sections of the aeroplane were brought out to the ship was nearly capsized, but thanks to the magnificent "lakemanship" of its crew of stalwart Yaos not a square inch of fabric was damaged, and after everything was hoisted aboard by means of the ship's derricks and safely secured, we sailed for the "open lake." The machine was not completely stripped. Only the wings and the engine had been removed from the fuselage, which straddled across the deck like an enormous locust.

A heavy southerly gale blew during the night, and it was a revelation to find how unpleasantly rough this inland sea could be. Most of the passengers, including my worthy Flight-Commander, suffered acutely from *mal-de-lac*, and they were not at all sorry to see the first glimpse of morning, when the wind died down to a gentle zephyr which scarcely served to waft the smoke from our funnel.

XIX. FIRST FLIGHT OVER THE LAKE, AND ULYSSES UP TO DATE.

We sighted Fort Johnston early in the morning of the fourth day of our voyage—a few houses half-hidden in a low-lying line of palm-trees over which there hung a pale blue mist, suggestive of swamps, mosquitoes, malaria, and a thousand other deadly things. Fort Johnston has a ghastly reputation, and if first appearances count for anything it is a reputation well earned.

It was several days before the machine was off-loaded, transported to the aerodrome and erected; and Hodge and I ran down to Zomba, where I had several long interviews with local residents who were more or less familiar with the district of Portuguese East Africa, now in enemy occupation. The Germans had made their headquarters at Old Mwembe—a Portuguese military post 100 miles east of the lake and 70 miles south of the Border, and the centre of a district lately ruled over by a very hot-headed and rebellious old gentleman named Mataka,

who, like his father before him, had been a very nasty thorn in the side of the Portuguese. The Germans had persuaded Mataka to take up arms against his old enemies, and at Mwembe it was reported that he was gathering all his warriors about him in preparation for a general advance into Portuguese East. Hun patrols had pushed south as far as Mtonia, on the border of Nyassaland, and the General ordered that we should carry out a reconnaissance over this place just to see if the enemy was preparing to hold it in force. The Fort Johnston aerodrome was a particularly bad one, consisting entirely of loose sand; and although on his trial trip Hodge "got off" and landed decently, neither of us would have been much surprised if we had crashed the morning that we went out together on our first reconnaissance. As a matter of fact we just managed to clear the palm-trees; but once in the air the machine flew better than it had ever done before.

With the altimeter reading 2000 feet we turned due north, and soon we had water only beneath us; for it was Hodge's intention to cut across one corner of the lake and fly up the coast. It made me feel uncomfortable to look down into the brown muddy shallows and think of the countless crocodiles who would benefit by a forced landing.

We were just about a mile from the shore when the sun suddenly appeared over the mountains, and immediately we began to experience the most terrifying bumps. One of them nearly put the machine into a spin, and it took Hodge all his time to correct it. I had to hold on like grim death the whole time (I had no belt) for fear of being thrown bodily out, and I was vastly relieved when the air gradually settled down once more.

We hugged the coast for nearly forty miles, and then decided to turn inland. The mountains still towered well above our heads, however, and as the "Old Bee" refused to climb another inch we had to make for a small gap between two very high peaks, through which it seemed that the machine might possibly fly. It was barely 100 yards across, and, bridged by a thick bank of cloud, it looked like the mouth of a brilliantly illuminated grotto, for on the other side of the mountains the sun was shining brightly. As the densely-wooded cliffs and ravines came swiftly nearer, we realised that it was going to be a very near thing. The gap was so narrow that if we were not able to fly through because of our height there would be no room to turn, and we should collide with the cliffs or dive into the trees. My tongue parched in my mouth, and I became aware of a nasty sensation in the region of my solar plexus, but looking back I saw that Hodge was grinning optimistically. A few more seconds and we entered the funnel-

mouth of the gap: the tree tops were so near that I could see the leaves. The cloud above cast a dark shadow over everything, but through the gap I could see the blue sky and the sun-bathed veldt beyond. Nearer and nearer it came. The grey granite walls closed in as did the magic sea-cliffs on Ulysses and his crew. Would we get through before they clashed? Our speed seemed to increase as the ground came nearer. A big black tree suddenly stood out in front—Hodge zoomed it as a horse would take a hurdle. Still nearer came the cliffs; . . . for a second they seemed to waver and then stand still, . . . and then they quickly began to recede, the trees began to sink swiftly and become less distinct, the cliffs rolled away—and suddenly the sun emerged and bathed the wings of the Old Bee with gold, transforming her into a marvellous yellow dragon-fly. *We were through!*

For twenty miles or so we now flew over a forest-clad tableland, intersected by numerous flashing streams, and patched here and there with native cultivations. Elephant tracks ran in all directions, and we were not long in sighting a small herd of these enormous beasts dosing peacefully in a shady river valley. They fled precipitately at our approach, and it was an extraordinary sight to see them dashing through the dense forest—a clearly-marked path appearing behind each of them. We had no difficulty in recognising the international border between Nyassaland and Portuguese East, blazed across veldt and mountain in an unwavering mathematically ruled line; but apart from that, there was not a single feature, natural or otherwise, that we could identify on the "map." We struck a road, however, and this finally led us to Mtonia, the place we had to reconnoitre. There was no sign of the enemy, and we followed a road that led north, until fifty minutes later we sighted Unyango, a small settlement at the foot of a rugged granite hill that rises nearly 1000 feet out of the plain. Two or three white men skedaddling swiftly into the bush indicated the presence of a Hun patrol at least, and this was confirmed when we came down to 400 feet and saw fifty or sixty askaris hiding under the trees and firing occasional shots into the air. Unfortunately we had no bombs, for we had been forced to carry extra petrol and refill the tank as before, and after making a sketch of the camp we turned for home.

XX. THE WONDERFUL ADVENTURE OF THE BICYCLE.

With a strong wind in our favour we reached the Livingstone Mountains in sixty minutes, and we calculated that we should just have sufficient petrol to see us back safely

to Fort Johnston. Just when we were in the ruggedest part of the mountains I suddenly smelled petrol, and looking anxiously forward saw that the petrol pipe was leaking badly near the carburettor. It was impossible to reach it with my hand because of a projecting ledge: the only thing to do was to climb out of my seat, and get in again head first. But this meant getting out on to the plane and climbing over the red-hot exhaust pipe, which, as I have said before, runs down the gunwale of the fuselage. If my clothing caught fire, the petrol, which was streaming along the floor, would soon do the same, and there would be a horrible explosion. Somehow or other, however, I managed to get my hand on the pipe and to hold it there for a few minutes before the last drop was exhausted. Then, of course, the engine stopped, but by that time we had crossed the mountains, and were within gliding distance of the lake side, where, in a maize field, Hodge made a magnificent landing. A huge crowd of niggers soon collected, and they informed us that the nearest bit of civilisation was Malindi Mission, nearly fourteen miles farther south, and six miles from Fort Johnston. To walk there in the blazing sunshine did not seem an attractive proposition, particularly as I had burned my knee rather badly on the exhaust pipe. We were just making up our minds what we should do when suddenly we heard a most peculiar noise, like a jangling of numerous tin cans and iron chains, and there appeared, riding down the narrow native road, a nigger on an extraordinary-looking vehicle—a bicycle of the type ridden by our ancestors, possessing an enormous wheel in front and a tiny one behind. Its ancient and tottering frame was reinforced with pieces of bamboo tied up with string, and the noise emanated from the uncoiled bearings and the various odd pieces of metal that hung out loosely here and there. The man dismounted, leaned his machine against a tree, and with an indescribable air of swagger came up to the aeroplane to compare professional notes. While he admired our mount we admired his, and after looking at it for a minute or two Hodge said: "Thank Heaven, just the very thing!"

In spite of my persuasion Hodge gallantly refused to leave his aeroplane, but with a noble spirit of self-sacrifice insisted that I should take the bicycle and ride to the mission.

With his help, therefore, I climbed on to the crazy saddle, and, amid the loud laughter and sarcastic remarks of the black multitude, started down the road. With all due modesty I may say that I rode it very well, and thinking that I would make every one aware of the fact, I ventured to look back and wave my hand in farewell. Unfortunately, just at that moment the road became very sandy; the whole machine suddenly side-slipped, and I was thrown head foremost into

a particularly thorny patch of bush. Two forced landings within fifteen minutes is rather trying for one's nerves, and I think my readers will forgive me for knocking down a great burly nigger who stood in the road shrieking with laughter. I felt considerably better after that and set off once more. I must have made an extraordinary sight, dressed as I was in flying kit, a leather cap and goggles on my head, a ragged old stocking round my neck, and two days' growth of beard on my chin. No wonder the natives flew terror-stricken into the bush as I rattled along through their villages. On the whole it was a very thrilling journey, but the most thrilling incident came just as I caught sight of the little Mission Church among the trees a mile or so away. Putting on an extra spurt, I dashed down a fairly steep hill, banked neatly round a turn at the bottom, and then saw to my horror, cutting straight across the road, a deep but narrow gully, three feet across. It was no use attempting to slow up, there were no brakes, and I had no desire to do another side-slip into the bush, so I did the only thing a respectable airman could do—I carried on; pedaling away as fast as I could, I reached the edge of the gully, whistled through the air, landed on the other side, and went on without going off. A minute or so later I arrived at the Mission, and by means of a motor-boat crossed the lake to Fort Johnston, where I landed only half an hour after we had been reported missing.

Mechanics and supplies of petrol were immediately despatched to the machine, which was found to be absolutely undamaged, and a day or two later the Old Bee arrived safely at Fort Johnston once more. Needless to say, Hodge refused to believe my story of the leaping of the precipice. Among airmen there is an incredible amount of professional jealousy.

XXI. HOW WE SETTLED OLD MATAKA.

By this time Northey had commenced a definite campaign against the Huns in Portuguese East. Mtonia had been occupied by the 5th South African Infantry, and a battalion of K.A.R.'s was on the way to reinforce them before they pushed out towards Mwembe.

With the object of reconnoitring this last-named place we set out very early one morning, flew up the lake in the starlight and crossed the mountains just as the sun was rising. At Mtonia we glided down and dropped a bag of despatches and mail and then turned due north for Unyango. From this point all information with regard to roads was very vague. We simply knew that Mwembe was so many days east, and we did not know how we should identify Mwembe if we saw it. The

whole country was very wild. A great mass of forest-clad mountains lay to the north, to the east there were hills with bare granite outcrops, patches of dense primeval forest, and a network of deep, swiftly flowing rivers. There was no sign of human inhabitation, but we saw many herds of eland, kudu, and zebra, and one small herd of elephant. For an hour we flew over the great wilderness with our spirits sinking lower and lower as mile after mile went by with no sign of the enemy. Then at last we spotted a bright reddish straight line on a hillside—a road. I simply shrieked with joy, for a mile or so beyond I saw with my glasses the smoke-fires and grass huts of a large camp.

But should we have enough petrol to do it? I had already emptied my two extra tins into the tank, and we had been out two and a half hours. Scribbling on bits of paper, we held a consultation, and at last decided that if we had not enough petrol to take us to Fort Johnston we would risk another forced landing on the lake side. We reached the camp in fifteen minutes. In the centre was the usual stone Boma, and clustered round were sufficient huts to provide shelter for 2000 men. We flew over at 800 feet, and for the first minute there was not the slightest sign of life other than that provided by the smoky camp-fires. Then suddenly from a very large hut there appeared a neatly uniformed but very portly white Hun. One glance upwards was sufficient to send him skeltering pell-mell towards a short line of trenches a hundred yards away, but before he reached this haven of safety he was joined by at least 500 niggers, who emerged from their huts like so many ants from a disturbed ant-heap. It was a ludicrous sight, for very much to the Hun's chagrin the natives were outstripping him. It nearly broke our hearts to think that we had no bomb to help him on his way, but we added greatly to the general consternation by diving down to about 100 feet from the ground, while I fired a few shots with my revolver. There was no time to waste, however, and after we had made a rough sketch of the camp and the roads leading from it, the Old Bee was turned homewards. The journey back was the roughest I had ever experienced. For nearly three hours we were tossed up and down like a cork in a mountain torrent, and never for one second was the physical and mental strain relaxed. Through the Livingstone Mountains the state of the air was simply appalling. On several occasions the machine began to spin, and only Hedge's consummate skill saved us from destruction. Luckily the wind was in our favour, and we finally glided safely down to the aerodrome after an absence of five and a half hours. On examination both tanks were found to be absolutely dry—once more the Old Bee had served us well.

With Mtonia in British hands it was deemed advis-

able to establish an aerodrome at this place, and two days after our long flight I sailed on the s.s. *Pioneer* for Lungwena Bay, whence a good safari path winds through a deep valley in the Livingstone Mountains to the interior. I had little difficulty in finding a suitable site for an aerodrome, although it took 700 strapping Yao women nearly a week to remove the rank grass and bush and smooth down several enormous termite heaps. Hodge, with Corporal Walker as passenger, left Fort Johnston as soon as I wired that all was ready, and the Old Bee landed at her new home in grand style. Our immediate task now was to prepare a detailed map of the country lying between Mtonia and Mwembe, and as soon as this was ready the British force, under the command of Colonel Shorthose (of the K.A.R.), moved of. Information came in that after our flight over Mwembe, Mataka had reconsidered his plans for a general invasion of Portuguese East, and that most of his braves had returned to their farms, to live the peaceful life once more. Shorthose met with little opposition, and the Huns retired swiftly northwards, leaving Old Mwembe in our hands. Once more the enemy was out of the Old Bee's range, and Hodge decided that he would risk a landing at Mwembe, fill up our tanks from a supply of petrol that had been sent out with the British column for that purpose, and carry out a reconnaissance as far north as the Revuma river, where it was said that the whole German Army was now concentrating. The force occupying Mwembe had been instructed to clear a space in the centre of the camp as soon as possible, to mark it with a huge white calico T, and to light big smoke-fires on our approach.

We left Mtonia one morning during a heavy rainstorm, and, after a very rough journey, reached our destination. The "aerodrome" measured only 150 yards by 20 yards; a strong wind was blowing exactly across it, yet Hodge made a perfect landing, and brought the Old Bee to a standstill one yard away from the trunk of a fat mango-tree. The whole force greeted us with deafening cheers, and our popularity increased as we off-loaded a huge bag of mail and a case of whisky. A few minutes later we left the ground once more, and, taking a north-easterly course, followed for nearly two hours the road along which the Hun had retired. During the whole of this time we had to fight our way through dense clouds and heavy rainstorms, and on several occasions we nearly collided with the great solitary mountain peaks that abound in the Revuma valley. Not the slightest sign of the enemy did we see, and at last we turned disconsolately homewards. Hodge made another excellent landing at Old Mwembe, and we decided to remain there all night, and return to Mtonia in the morning.

XXII. THE CURSE OF THE CROW.

This had been the most disappointing reconnaissance that Hodge and I had yet carried out together. Never until now had we returned minus information of some description. Could it be that our wonderful luck was at last changing? I began to wonder if there was something in the crow business after all. No matter where one camps in East Africa, there will always appear, sooner or later, a number of very dilapidated-looking black and white crows, which hop about the ground near the kitchen, looking for stray bits of food, and which soon become remarkably tame. There is a superstition among the natives, and shared by many white men, that to kill one of these crows will inevitably bring bad luck. A day or two before we left Mtonia, I went out one morning after a lion that had been reported in the vicinity, and in addition to my rifle I took with me a revolver, carried in a holster strapped to my thigh. For many miles we tramped over the veldt, but we saw no sign of his Royal Highness. Suddenly, however, one of these dear old crows appeared overhead. A nigger who was with me pointed to it and said—

"Shoot it, master!"

Without thinking what I was doing, I cried "Right-o!" and drawing the revolver, aimed it haphazardly into the sky and fired. To my amazement the crow fluttered down dead to the ground. I felt horribly ashamed of myself. To kill wantonly any living thing that is not harmful, or useful as food, is considered the essence of bad sportsmanship, and I cursed the evil moment of my silliness.

Hodge was really angry when I told him about it, although he realised as well as I did myself that it had all been perfectly accidental.

"That's the end of our good luck, my lad!" he said pessimistically; and although I still flatly refuse to have any belief in the supernatural, the events that followed are not without a certain amount of dramatic significance.

We left for Mtonia at daybreak, and after a terribly bumpy journey landed safely. The machine had actually stopped, just outside the hangar, when suddenly a terrific gust of wind swept down the aerodrome, seized hold of the planes, and lifted the Old Bee bodily over. Apart from a nasty shaking neither of us was hurt, but the under carriage and the propeller were smashed to smithereens.

"Let's shoot another crow!" murmured Hodge sarcastically as we walked to the mess.

While the Old Bee was undergoing repairs, orders came from Northey that Hodge was to fly to Ssonga at the first opportunity; and as all our gear at Fort Johnston was to be shipped back

to German East, it was arranged that Corporal Walker should fly with Hodge as passenger, while I proceeded to Nyassaland, and thence by boat to Weidhaven, the port for Ssongea. It took me three days to march to the lake side, when I embarked on the *Queen Victoria* for Fort Johnston. Here all our remaining stores were loaded on to the *Gwendoline*, and we sailed as soon as possible, arriving at Weidhaven two days later.

Bad news was awaiting me. Hodge and Corporal Walker had left Mtonia, and nothing had been heard of them for seventy-two hours. It was highly probable that a terrible fate had overtaken them both. With the vivid imagination that has ever been my curse, I pictured the Old Bee crashing into one of those terrible mountain cliffs, or spinning down into the giant forest. Even if they were not killed in the actual crash, death in a hundred ghastly shapes would dog their footsteps on the way back to the camp.

On my arrival at Ssongea, I reported to General Northey. There was no news of the missing airmen, but patrols had been sent out towards the Rovuma in search of them. At the aerodrome I found a wire from the Squadron ordering Hodge to send a pilot familiar with the country to Iringa to fly up a new machine that would arrive there shortly. With Hodge missing and Murray on leave, there was no such pilot in the Flight; and although a number of reserve pilots were now on their way by road to Ssongea, not one of them had ever flown in East Africa. Therefore I suggested to the Staff that I should proceed to Iringa myself, and act as navigator to Blackburn, a pilot who had been in charge of the Iringa depot for some time, but who was not exactly on the personnel of the Flight.

I left early on the following day by car. On the way to Njombe I was bowled over with another attack of fever, and for two days I lost all interest in life. Maganga, however, pulled me through, and we were able to push on to Njombe on the third day. At Iringa I found Blackburn also suffering from malaria, and it may be imagined that we made a very jovial party. The machine arrived in due course, but Blackburn was too ill to set out immediately. At the end of the week we were overjoyed to hear that Hodge and Walker were safe. They had reached Old Mwembe, the first stage of their long journey, without mishap, but in taking off from this place the Old Bee had played her last little joke. The engine failed a few feet from the ground, and the machine had crashed into a mango-tree with terrific force. Walker had been slightly crushed, but Hodge, with his usual luck, had come off unscathed. They had both to walk the whole way back to the lake, however, and Hodge's state of mind and temper may be

judged from the wire he sent me:—

"Both safe. Please state if you have any further supplies of dead crows to hand."

Blackburn at last announced that he felt fit enough for the journey, although, judging from his looks, a trip back to the Base in an ambulance car would have been a much saner proposition. However, the machine was urgently wanted at the front, and, albeit with some misgivings, we climbed in early one morning and prepared ourselves for the journey. Personally, I had no interest in anything except my throbbing head and aching spleen. We left the ground just as the sun was rising, and at first sailed swiftly along over the dense belt of forest that fringes the little Ruaha river. We had been in the air about five minutes when it began to dawn on me that something was wrong. Although the engine was running sweetly enough, the machine had not climbed an inch since reaching 150 feet. Loosening my belt I turned to Blackburn.

"Everything O.K.?" I bawled.

He shook his head portentously and pointed homewards. Very obviously something *was* wrong. As we turned I noticed that the trees seemed nearer—we were rapidly losing height. The aerodrome was nearly two miles distant; there was not a square yard of open country on the way: had we sufficient height to reach it? The altimeter was reading 100 feet, and the little hand was flickering backwards . . . 90 feet . . . 80 feet . . . 70 feet. . . . A big tree suddenly loomed above us. . . . Blackburn banked steeply and avoided it, only to find another behind. . . . I saw the great fat trunk of a baobaab 100 feet away . . . we dived steeply . . . there came a terrific crash . . . the starboard plane whizzed over my head like the sail of a windmill . . . and then came a great darkness. . . .

When I regained consciousness my first sensation was that of being very wet and cold. I discovered that the tank, on which the observer's seat is fixed, had burst, and that the lower part of my body was drenched in petrol. I was pinned down by the wreckage of the plane, and a broken strut was sticking into my "tummy."

"Are you all right?" Blackburn shouted. I could hear him struggling to get loose, and at last was delighted to feel his strong grasp on my shoulder.

"Come on, old man, try and wriggle out!" as he commenced to tug at the wires that wrapped me round. "We want to get back as quickly as possible."

There was a look in his face that puzzled me. He seemed hysterically anxious to get me free.

"Is there anything specially wrong?" I asked, and then suddenly the blood seemed to freeze in my veins, for, borne on

the warm forest breeze came a sound that is dreadfully familiar to one who has lived in the wilds of Africa—a harsh crackling and spluttering, accompanied by the pungent smell of burning. . . . My God! a bush fire — *and to windward of the petrol-drenched wreckage of the aeroplane.*

"It's all right!" he reassured me; "only a small fire, . . . other side of the river!" But by the way he fought with those devilish wires I knew that he was deceiving me so that I should not lose my head. The crackling was coming nearer, . . . I could hear the splutter and roar of the wicked yellow flames eating swiftly through the parched grass and undergrowth a hundred yards away. Like madmen we struggled to break free. . . . Our hands began to drip with blood from wounds made by the frayed wire cables. . . . Beads of ice-cold sweat trickled down my face. . . . In two minutes the flames would reach the petrol. . . . In two minutes. . . . With a superhuman effort Blackburn suddenly levered up the battered plane that was still imprisoning me. I became aware of a delightful sense of freedom. . . . Slowly I struggled out of my twisted seat, staggered drunkenly on to the ground, and promptly dropped in a dead faint. . . .

It must have been nearly half an hour later when I came round once more. I saw that I was lying on the grass, in the shade of a spreading acacia, a hundred yards from the crash. The wind had dropped, and the fire had burned itself out. The pain in my body was very bad, but it did not compare with the agonising ache of my mind. A deep and uncanny stillness brooded over the forest — the stillness almost of death; even the bush-cuckoos and the toucans were silent; not the chirp of a cricket nor the buzz of a mosquito disturbed the air's tranquillity.

Blackburn, before setting out for help, had carried me to the acacia, and he had now returned with a doctor and an ambulance from Iringa. A hasty examination showed that I was suffering from malaria, dysentery, appendicitis, and general shock, and after asking the doctor if he did not see any signs of galloping consumption and cancer as well, I climbed up stiffly into the car. At the hospital I made a remarkably quick recovery from the first three named complaints; but as that wretched crow *would* come and perch on the foot of my bed all day and night long, it was decided that I should be sent down to South Africa for a rest. Thus ended, so far as flying is concerned, my experiences as an airman in East Africa.

THE LEFT CHEEK OF MR GRIMMER.

BY T. N. SHANE.

"I SHARN'T go," said Luke Grimmer.

"Sharn't you, bor?" said his visitor, stealthily feeling the raw edge of his collar, as if he conceived that he had endured a good deal to no purpose. There was, in fact, some such impression taking root within his mind: it helped to accentuate an appearance that was at all times outwardly disconsolate to the point of caricature.

"No," said the other strongly, with a sort of luminous flush starting out on his high cheek-bones. "Not if they 'old the meetin' in a public-'ouse. I belonged to the Lord afore I belonged to the Aggeracultural Labrers' Union, and I'll niver peril my salvation to set on no County Council as iver breathed. Not but what I tek it kindly of you, Fred Eke—you and your mates. But you know my princerple. My trust is in the Lord."

"Is it, bor?" said Mr Eke, moving uneasily under the still fervour of the other's gaze. "That meks it a bit orkard, meks it a bit orkard."

He remained staring intently at the bleak, clean kitchen fire, until the other said suddenly—

"You orter brought your mates in, Fred. Where are they?"

"D'ye see," said Mr Eke, glancing swiftly up and down again, "they're down at the . . . what I mean, they're resting, like. Theer's on'y two on 'em—Tuke an' Tegerdine."

"Two or two hunderd," said Luke Grimmer, "I tek it kindly of 'em."

The flush still lingered on his cheeks, and seemed to darken by assimilation of colour from his soft brown beard. Brown—an untanned brown, as it were—was the prevailing hue of his complexion: at first sight he appeared to have brown eyes. Actually his eyes were blue and limpid, but there were ruddy flecks within the iris, and a flawing heat, as of embers, in the long glances that he gave. This man, middle-aged, almost illiterate, farm foreman and chapel preacher, narrowly escaped being a fanatic: to this extent he was held in mistrust by his fellows, who had a shrewd preference for leadership rather than ascendancy.

"So they'll chuse Merrishaw," said Mr Eke with a traversing glance which just avoided the other's eyes. "Mek no doubt they will—long as you ain't theer."

"They must chuse as they think best," said the foreman; "I don't 'old with selectin' a canderdate at a public-'ouse, and I must be trew to the princerple I 'old. But if that's their wish to meet there, then it must be so. On'y, I sharn't go."

"D'ye see, bor," said Mr Eke, in a tone of extenuation, "that's the Lamb an' Flag. What I mean, that's not a place as I should wish to speak despairingly of. Anybody could set theer an' be as respectable as they liked."

His gaze had become entangled with Mr Grimmer's, and he stopped short with an uncertain tremor of his long raw-shaven chin.

"What I reckon," he said galvanically, "it lays 'twixt you and 'im. An' they'll chuse you if you're theer. . . ."

"Fred Eke," said the other, forcing a smile by an effort that brought the perspiration to the hollows beneath his eyes, "if the Evil One come to you in this very room as we set in, an' offered you ten thousand pound for your immortal soul, what answer should you give?"

He stretched out his hand in a crude rhetorical gesture.

"You'd say, 'Git thee be'int me, Satan, an' all thy iniquerty.'"

"Oh, ar," said Mr Eke rigidly. "Ar . . . . I didn't 'ardly 'ear what you arst me, bor."

He made a slight and ungainly movement with his knees.

"What I mean, bor," he said, "you'll git votes wheer 'e wouldn't. 'E'll niver git in, if they chuse 'im, an' I know you would. Good o' the cause, bor. Good o' the cause."

He took a rapid observation of the foreman's face, and returned once more to a contemplation of the fire.

"That Merrishaw," he said, jerking his head sideways, "'e's a rewd feller, bor. A rewd feller. I'll niver give no vote to a feller like that."

"You weon't?" said the other. "You weon't?"

He crouched forward in his chair, and his eyes grew hot.

"What was that you was saying just now?" he said. . . . "Good o' the cause! Let that be your watchword, Fred Eke, an' vote for the man as is chose for the good o' the cause."

"You don't know 'is rewdness," returned Mr Eke, flickering into a melancholy choler. "Not same as I do. I shouldn't want you to know it same as I do."

The foreman sat back in his chair, and drawing out a large handkerchief, wiped his face.

"A rewd brewt, I call 'im," said Mr Eke, who felt that this was a good opportunity for looking the other straight in the face. "D'ye know what 'e called me? It's a thing I'd niver repeat."

"Mekkin' game," he said, brightening with an inspiration. "Why, 'e's allus mockin' at some one. What was that as 'e used to call you yeer last Michaelmas?"

"Forgive an' forget," said the other with a strained smile. "That's what the Book tells us. Forgive an' forget."

Mr Eke's gaze hurried back to the refuge of the fire.

"Oh, ar," he said bleakly. "That's 'ow I mostly do."

He fell into a sombre reverie, with loose interstices of speech.

"A rewd feller," he murmured unhappily. "Calls anybody anythink. . . . Anythink, bor."

"I shall nommernate you," he said, as he was moving to depart. "They sharn't say they 'adn't a chanche o' the best man."

Luke Grimmer slightly shook his head.

"You're a trew friend," he said. "You orter brought your mates in."

"There's on'y two on 'em," said Mr Eke, who seemed to imply that he did not much care to be seen with anything less than a crowd. "What I mean, Tuke an' Tegerdine."

He faced round slowly as he came to the gate.

"You wanter think it over, bor," he said; "think it over. You got while to-morrow night."

At a distance of twenty paces he turned again.

"I'll let you know," he said, with a sort of dismal truculence derived from the necessity of raising his voice. "Arter they chused, like, I'll come along an' let you know."

Luke Grimmer nodded, and went back slowly to his kitchen fireside. Mrs Grimmer, from a general aversion to visitors, which she invariably contrived to attribute to their individual shortcomings, had listened to the interview from the privacy of an inner room. She had returned to the kitchen, and was sitting by the fire when her husband re-entered: as he came through the door she glanced up at him with an expression that was a concise manifestation of her state of mind.

"That Eke brought muck in on 'is boots?" she said. "There's gen'lly some one battling about when the mud's thickest."

The foreman nodded with a slightly foolish air of acquiescence, and went about, treading delicately, to his chair. He had never quite accustomed himself to the singular completeness of his wife's discourse; there was an interval of some minutes before he said diffidently—

"Mek no doubt you know what 'e come for. I tek it very friendly of 'im."

Mrs Grimmer's gaze tracked methodically towards the door.

"He must 'a come through all the sludge 'e could find," she said.

Her tone, without any tinge of complaint, succeeded in giving this utterance the effective prestige of a statement of fact.

"Ar," said the foreman, peering down at the floor, "'E didn't orter done so. . . . It's a ewrie day, though."

He straightened himself slowly.

"'Pears we shall atter vote for Merrishaw," he said, overcoming a sort of reluctance in his throat. "For the County Council, I mean."

"For'oo?" said Mrs Grimmer, momentarily looking up from the floor.

"For Merrishaw," said her husband more firmly. "They're orf to chuse 'im 'stead o' me."

Mrs Grimmer looked down again.

"Just's you like," she said, making no attempt to dissemble an indifference that almost amounted to disdain. "On'y I don't want no more slagging round an' bringing muck in th' 'ouse."

The foreman was content to accept this bare form of acquiescence, which probably comprehended the whole of his wife's interest in the affair. It consoled him somewhat in any case to be rid of minor preoccupations.

Mr Eke, in spite of his undertaking, did not put in an appearance on the following night. To Luke Grimmer suspense was an irreligious surrender, but he suffered none the less from an ache of small conjecture, and counted it an act of Providence when, during the next morning, an errand to the village procured him an encounter with his delinquent ally.

"It was late, bor," said Mr Eke, in explanation of his absence of the preceding night. "D'ye see, we got harguin'. Howers we must 'a bin. But I couldn't mek nothin' on 'em."

"Ah," said the foreman, spinning the pedal of his bicycle with his foot. "Well, I expected nothin' else. I've no right to murmur."

"Nothin' on 'em," repeated Mr Eke, with an expression of discontent which was partly due to his recollections. "That Siggie, 'e was all for 'im. All for 'im, bor. 'Ar,' I ses to 'im, 'what about that barrer you bruk?'"

"Bruk a barrer I lent 'im," he added in parenthesis. "I orter knowed better'n lend a feller like that it."

"They were mostly in Merrishaw's be'alf, then?" said the other, looking up.

Mr Eke, using the hoe on which he was leaning as a swivel, changed his direction half-left.

"What I mean," he said. "All on 'em wadn't for 'im, but them as was for 'im was all for 'im."

He stopped and added with some diffidence: "D'ye see what I mean, like?"

The foreman nodded. "It p'r'aps med no difference," he said, "me not going, I mean."

"It did an' all," said Mr Eke obdurately. "That was what they was gitting arter me about. 'Why ain't 'e 'ere?' they ses. I ses: 'You don't wanter git arter *me*.'"

Luke Grimmer looked at him with eyes that began to glow.

"Did you tell 'em why I wadn't there?" he said. "Did you tell 'em I was trew to my princerple?"

"Ar . . . I telled 'em," said Mr Eke, breaking into a mottled blush. "They're rum fellers, some on 'em. 'The man's a right to do as he likes,' I ses. 'Some on you git too fond o' your beer,' I ses."

The warmth died out of the foreman's eyes.

"Ah," he said. "Very like you was a bit too. . . ."

He looked down again, dallying with the pedal.

"I on'y wanted a understandin'," he said. "I didn't want no one to mek no mistake."

He searched in his mind for

a phrase about which no mistake could be made.

"I put my principle before all worldly gain," he said slowly. "My conscience tells me 'ow I ought to do. . . . If I offend one o' these little ones, it'd be better for me to 'ave a millstone tied round my neck an' chucked into the sea."

"Very like," said Mr Eke, judging by the sound of this passage that he would gain nothing by an attempt to elucidate its meaning. "On'y you can't mek some on 'em see it."

"Well, it's due to you—to all them as supported me—to know 'ow I stand," said the foreman. "When I see Tuke or Tegerdine I shall tell 'em the same as I've told you."

Mr Eke adjusted his cap so as to shelter his features, to some extent, from a direct scrutiny.

"Ar," he said. "That Tegerdine's a rum feller. A rum feller, mister."

"What?" said the foreman, looking up quickly. "Did 'e vote for Merrishaw?"

"'E did an' all," returned Mr Eke, clearing his throat. "I ses to 'im, 'What sort o' game do you reckon this is?' 'E ses, 'Niver you mind.' I ses, 'Ar, well, you're a Bolshiek.' It med 'em larf."

He glanced furtively from beneath his cap, with the beginnings of a self-conscious smile.

"Med some on 'em larf," he amended austerely. "They'll larf at anythink, some on 'em."

The foreman roused himself from a sort of quick trance.

"I bear no bad will," he said almost sharply. "Iv'ry man's a right. . . ."

He threw a leg over his bicycle.

"One thing," he said, gazing fixedly down the road, "our 'ands is set to the plough, an' there must be no lookin' back. I'm as willin' as iver, now we've got a canderdate, to work for the cause in whatsoiver way I'm thought fit. You tell 'em that, Fred Eke."

"They'll want you an' all, bor," said Mr Eke sombrely. "That rewd Merrishaw's no good on'y at mockin' a people."

The foreman nodded slightly and mounted his bicycle.

"Maybe," he said, speaking over his shoulder as he urged the machine forward. "Maybe not. Thank you kindly, Fred Eke, for all you've done."

For more than a week Luke Grimmer lived in an enforced detachment that was only rendered endurable by his observance of a certain private ritual, without which, to him, the sacrifice of his ambition would not have seemed complete. He prayed nightly for the success of the chosen candidate, and preached at the local chapel from texts so allusive as to be almost topical. On the tenth day he was approached by a deputation, and asked to speak at a meeting on behalf of the "cause": the deputation ingenuously counted the choice of this word unto themselves as righteousness. Mr Merrishaw himself possessed no eloquence beyond an easy aptitude for informal conversation: his gifts in this

respect had made him, if not widely popular, so readily understood that his adoption by the selection committee of the Agricultural Labourers' Union bore some semblance of universal flattery. It was generally conceded, however, that his was not the style for public oratory. He himself was singularly frank in admitting a lack of the sort of invention which such an occasion requires, and was one of the foremost in advocating the qualifications of his former rival.

"Git ole 'Postle Grimmer," he said with the cheerful ribaldry that made him eminent. "'E can 'oller at 'em like Moses in th' Ark."

The spokesman of the deputation not unnaturally chose to prefer their joint petition in terms of his own; he was, in fact, a venerable supporter of the village chapel, and had a mild kind of admiration for Luke Grimmer's pulpit manner.

"You speak very plain an' distinct," he said, amplifying Mr Merrishaw's facetious notion in terms more congenial to the occasion. "An' you've got a good prophesying kind o' way with you. I don't doubt you could go on for howers at a stretch—if anybody wanted to 'ear you, I mean."

"I shall do my best," said Luke Grimmer. "An' I thank you all. It's a good cause, an' I should be unworthy of my 'ire if I stretched not forth my 'and to the good work when the time was due."

The three members of the deputation exchanged furtive glances of approval.

"That's 'ow you want to talk," said the spokesman with a sober twinkle of satisfaction. "You talk like that, then it'll be all right for ivery body."

He lingered behind the others on a pretext of private affairs.

"You erter bin theer," he said with a thin flush of contrition. "Th' other night, I mean. Why, do you know you're the very man as we want?"

Luke Grimmer made no reply. For an instant the exceeding bitterness of his disappointment made his soul sick.

"You orter bin theer," repeated the other, gazing intently at the opposite wall. "Then we should a voted for you. You needn't a drunk no beer yourself. We should a med allowances."

"It's past talking of now," said the foreman, slowly clenching his fingers. "I couldn't do no different."

"But I'll be 'appy to speak on Wed'sday," he said presently. "It's a priv'lege. You tell Merrishaw I thank him for the priv'lege. An' I thank you for 'ow you spoke just now."

He laboured hard to maintain this note of self-effacing tranquillity, foreseeing the meeting, now inevitable, between himself and Mr Merrishaw. That personage, never much disabled by any species of self-consciousness, infused into the native breeziness of

his manner a derision that only just fell short of being obvious to the outer world.

"They orter chose you, mate," said he with a galling affectation of considerate amity. "I believe you'd a got in. I believe you would. So I'm certain sure I shall."

"No 'arm in your sproutin' to 'em a bit," he said tolerantly, the night before the meeting. "It'll amuse you, an' it won't 'urt nobody."

"I shall speak for the good o' the cause," said the foreman, welling into a sudden vehemence; "not for the benefit of no man as lives."

"That's what I say," said the imperturbable Mr Merrishaw. "It'll be summat for you to do, an' you won't do no 'arm, any'ow."

The foreman had this utterance in his mind when, on the Wednesday night, he sat facing a large but apathetic gathering in the Council School-room. The audience was widely representative. It included a considerable proportion of children, eating oranges, and generally making the most of a novel aspect of familiar surroundings. There were even dogs, yawning prodigiously beneath their owners' seats, or padding softly round in a mood of inquiry, which appeared to have a depressing effect upon their spirits. The electors present were remarkable for a common demeanour suggestive of detected guilt—the rare exceptions concentrated a kind of powerful attention on the platform to such a degree that the chairman was visibly affected, and confined his opening remarks to a hurried utterance which he seemed to lift out of himself by the physical device of rising very quickly and sitting down again before the words had time to lose their upward momentum.

"I now arst Mist' Grimmer to 'dress 'smeeting."

Luke Grimmer rose to the hollow echo of "'Ear, 'ear!" (from Mr Eke, strategically seated in a distant corner), and stood in silence for a few seconds. The tension of the atmosphere immediately hardened and grew brittle.

"Friends," he said, shattering it with a strong and resonant delivery, "when I was first arst to speak on be'alf of the Union's canderdate, I was told I shouldn't do no 'arm."

There was a loose rustle of breathing, and laughter, and a lone cry from Mr Eke.

"Meor you will, bor, meor you will!"

"No 'arm," repeated the foreman, looking slowly around him. "I ought a bin told that if I didn't speak I shouldn't do no good."

The audience were content. The familiar voice had already set their minds at ease. They felt that this was what they had come out to see, and a comfortable stir, the equivalent of applause, helped to round off the more substantial periods of the address. It was not quite a characteristic oration. Insistence rather than fervour made the force of its appeal, but this absence of colour was little

remarked by an audience that was not disposed in any case to real criticism. At the conclusion there was a brisk outbreak of clapping, in the midst of which Mr Merrishaw rose. It had not been known definitely, even to his committee, that he would offer any remarks of his own, and the applause ebbed away so rapidly that Mr Eke's monotonous and clanging cry of "'Ear, 'ear!" fell suddenly into an abyss of silence, and died in small echoes in the remote corners of the room.

"Friends," said Mr Merrishaw. His self-possession showed itself in a smile accurately gauged. "Friends, I thank you for the way you have listened to our friend's remarks, being as 'e spoke on my be'alf and on be'alf of the Union. I'm no speaker myself—nowt more'n passin' the time o' day, or crackin' a joke maybe—but I can give you my poleroy in 'alf a dozen words. 'Igher wages, 'olidays, an' small 'oldings—the three Haitches."

He was obliged to pause until the storm of clapping and shouting (swelled by the juvenile portion of the assembly, who found a piquant savour of revenge in yelling till the walls rang) had somewhat subsided. Upon his holding up his hand it ceased immediately, and he resumed—

"I ain't got the gift o' sproutin' to you same as our respected friend, 'Postle Grimmer, but I 'ope the little I've said will go a long way."

Luke Grimmer half-rose, but sat down again heavily. The sustained roar of applause was pierced by whistling, and by occasional shrill cries—

"Good ole 'Postle Grimmer!"

"Three cheers for the 'Postle!"

The chairman hastened to deliver the complimentary remarks which he had been composing, in a sweat of trepidation, during the more substantial orations, and the meeting was declared closed. Luke Grimmer sat still until the last of the throng, still bandying his name among themselves, were jostling through the exit. When the committee, breaking off their mutual congratulations, moved to bring up the rear, he rose and placed himself immovably in front of Mr Merrishaw.

"I don't know as you need a said what you did," he said with a kind of slow heat. "I mean what you called me—'Postle Grimmer."

"That's 'is rewdness," said a voice from over his shoulder. "You don't wanter tek no notice, bor."

Mr Merrishaw looked quickly away from the foreman, and met the hostile melancholy of Mr Eke's gaze with a hard grin.

"Wait while the 'lection's over," he said. "You'll tek a bit o' notice of me then, p'r'aps."

"I'm sure," said the chairman, looking anxiously round for support, "Mist' Grimmer spoke very clear an' able. So a joke or two, as I might term it, woon't signerfy 'ere or there."

Luke Grimmer glanced slightly at the speaker. "I shall vote for you," he said, addressing himself again to Mr Merrishaw, "for the sake o' the Union, but I'll do no more. I sh'll address no more meetings, an' I sh'll set on no more committees, for the wanton way you've tret me in the face of all the people."

"Oh," said Mr Merrishaw, suddenly losing his air. "Ah!"

"We orter to be gittin' 'ome," said the chairman unhappily.

"I'll say no more," said the foreman abruptly, and he turned and made for the door.

"Rowdness," said Mr Eke's voice in his ear. "D'ye know what you orter said to 'im, bor?"

He glanced at the foreman's face and stopped short. When they had emerged from the building he spoke again.

"What I mean, bor," he said, under cover of the darkness: "you *niver* orter vote for 'im. A feller like that."

The foreman withdrew to the side of the road.

"I must return good for evil," he said in a suppressed voice, "if I do no more."

A random shout came through the darkness.

"Goo' night, 'Postle."

"That's young Siggie," said Mr Eke. "If it was anybody else their father 'ud leather 'em."

"I'll niver vote for 'im," he added, sucking his breath between his teeth. "I couldn't do it, bor, couldn't do it."

"Who-so-iver smiteth me on the right cheek . . ." said the foreman.

He stopped.

"Good-night, Fred," he said brusquely. "You're a trew friend."

The day of the poll was a day of scanty snow and rain, with occasional shivering glimpses of the sun. Mrs Grimmer's attitude—she stated that the mucky weather wasn't fit for a dog to vote—imposed some additional labour on her husband, who was intent on acquitting his conscience of its sole remaining obligation. The painful rectitude of the man was not satisfied with less than certainty: with the connivance of the presiding officer, who accepted the arrangement as a choice conjugal example, he was able to supervise his wife's vote, to the extent of guiding her pencil with his hand.

"I kept my word," he said to Mr Eke, who was lying in wait for him at his own door. "I give 'im two votes, for the sake o' my own righteousness, an' moor than that I woon't do."

"You niver ought," said Mr Eke, though without enthusiasm. "You niver ought, bor. . . . They tell me 'e's pollin' strong."

"It's nothin' to me," said the foreman. "My mind's at rest. It'd profit me nothin' to gain the 'ole world an' lose my own soul."

"It wouldn't, bor," said Mr Eke, who was plainly not out for ethical enlightenment.

He mused dispiritedly for a short space of time.

"Rum 'un if 'e got in," he said at last, with a weak air of philosophy. "I sh'd be in rum form for a small 'oldin' . . . I donno as I sharn't go to the count."

The foreman hesitated on an utterance. "Let you know if I do, bor," said Mr Eke, moving off. "Without it's middlin' late."

He did not seem to expect a reply, nor was the other wholly prepared with an accurate form of refusal. Luke Grimmer indeed had come to be confused by the workings of his own mind: he could only vaguely discern that his desires were being deflected from the austere aims towards which he strove to direct them.

He sat late that night, poring sometimes over the close-knit columns of a cheap gaunt Bible, but oftener intent upon the little bitter hopes and fears that crossed his mind like gnats above a stagnant pool. He returned again and again to the text, wrestling with the impatience that consumed him.

At eleven o'clock a step sounded on the asphalt path outside, followed by a single knock at the door. The foreman put down his book, and going across to the door with a furtive haste that he strove vainly to control, opened it wide. There was nothing discernible at first in the windy dusk outside, but Mr Eke's voice, coming from so much nearer than he expected that he was a little startled, said in a hollow tone—

"We won, bor."

"Come in," said the foreman, moving back. "I thought it was you, Fred. Come in."

Mr Eke came into the kitchen and stood blinking at the light. He wore a monstrous orange-coloured favour, and there was a kind of dubious jauntiness about him as if he were trying to be glad on principle.

"Who's in?" said the foreman with an effort, though the orange-hued rosette needed no confirmation.

"We are," said Mr Eke, adhering stubbornly to the plural. "Merrishaw's in. By one vote. That's a rum 'un, bor."

"By one vote," repeated the other slowly.

His eye fell on the open Bible, lying where he had placed it on the table.

"This is the Lord's doing," he said suddenly and vehemently, "and it is wonderful in our eyes."

"It is an' all, bor," said Mr Eke.

THE WALLS OF DERRY.

BY J. A. STRAHAN.

If it be a blessing to a nation to possess a short memory of its past, what a chosen people the English must be! The average Scotsman or Irishman has a vivid remembrance of every capital event in the history of his country for centuries back: the average Englishman's recollection of such events in the history of his country begins the day before yesterday. Struggles, victories, and defeats which have shaped the fate of his race, and have even changed the fate of the world, once over are quickly forgotten by him. His notion or, at any rate, his practice is to let bygones be bygones.

This was not always the disposition of the English people. At one time they remembered their past as thoroughly as do the Scots and Irish of to-day; but that was when they were a nation of farmers who spent their winter evenings talking by their own firesides, and not a nation of townsmen who spend their winter—and for that matter, their summer—evenings staring at cinema shows. Still the change has its advantages: it prevents the indefinite continuation of feuds, national and international, which threaten at present to be the curse of all the rest of Europe. And besides, it is of immense advantage to their new ruling classes, which now consist of the politicians and publicists. If these new pastors and masters of the English people could not rely on their hearers and readers promptly forgetting all they say and prophesy, where would these worthies be? Well, I venture to think they would be in much the same paddock as sporting tipsters are among sportsmen who know. I once was very well acquainted with a sporting tipster, who was kind enough to give me gratis many sporting tips. Being neither a racing nor a betting man, I paid little heed to them. Once, however, when at the Derby, I recollected one of his tips for that race, and, just as a joke, put a pound or two on his selection. The beast I betted on came in an easy first, and, much to my astonishment and delight, I received from the bookmaker some forty pounds clear profit on my venture. When I next met my tipster friend, I told him of the good turn his advice had done me, and added, by way of compliment, "I don't doubt but if I had put money on all the tips you have given me, I should now be living in luxury." My friend gazed at me darkly for a moment; then he replied with unexpected vehemence, "By glory, if you had, you would now be living in the workhouse!" At present, it looks to me very much as if the reliance of the Eng-

lish people on the advice of their political tipsters might end before long in their living in some sort of analogous abode.

These reflections have been suggested by certain comments which appeared some time ago in more than one English newspaper on troubles which had then occurred in connection with a Nationalist demonstration in the city of Londonderry. If I remember rightly, the Nationalist demonstration had taken place on Lady Day, a favourite day for such proceedings, though the connection between Holy Mary or anybody or anything else that's holy and Sinn Feinism seems just at present somewhat remote. Rightly or wrongly, the notion got abroad that the Nationalist procession intended to process along the ancient walls of Derry. The competent military authority learning this, regarded it as a deliberate attempt to exasperate the Loyalists—as perhaps we may now be permitted to call the only people in Ireland who even profess a desire to remain subjects of King George and citizens of the British Empire; and to prevent the Loyalists driving the Nationalists from their sacred places, resolved to prevent the Nationalists ever getting there at all—he occupied the ancient walls with British soldiers. Thereupon the Nationalists screamed that they never intended to process along the walls, and, to show that they were sincere, they proceeded to wreck the shops and houses of the Loyalists which lay within or adjacent to their own quarter, until they were calmed by the batons of the police and the bayonets of the soldiers.

The English newspapers to which I have referred, when they reported this riot, were shocked at the stupidity and partiality of the competent military authority: the Loyalists demonstrated yearly along these old walls—why, then, should not the Nationalists? A little sketch of Irish history will show why these old walls are sacred to all upholders in Ulster of the British connection and the British Empire, and are accursed ground to enemies of the same. It will also, perhaps, throw some little light on the present opinions and the past actions of Ulster Loyalists.

To begin at the beginning, the first we hear of Derry is as a monastery, said to be founded by St Columbkille before he left Ireland to found the far more famous monastery at Iona of the Western Isles. Whether he was, in fact, the founder of the Derry house of religion is not quite certain, but it is quite certain that from a very early date that house existed. For centuries it was plundered from time to time by Danes, Normans, English, and Irish with monotonous regularity and impartiality. At last it, with the neighbouring district, was occupied for England by Colonel Edward Randolph. That was in 1506; but the surrounding woods, mountains, and bogs made the climate too trying for English

soldiers, and before long it was abandoned. In 1600 it was again occupied for England by Sir Henry Docwra; and though it was sacked by the Irish in 1606, the English never again lost their hold on it. In 1609 King James granted the site of the monastery and all the new county of Derry, formed out of the county of Coleraine and part of the territory of Tyrconnell, to the twelve great companies of the City of London, on condition that the companies would build a walled city on the site of the monastery and settle the county with Englishmen and "inland" (which means Lowland) Scots. Hence came its modern name of Londonderry.

The physical state of the country at the time it was granted may be gathered from this fact: the county of Derry, less the district of Limavady, which was already planted, contains 480,000 acres; yet, according to the Carew MSS., each of the twelve City companies received a grant of no more than 3100 acres. Clearly this means that all the rest of the land in the country was what was then called waste, unenclosed country, consisting of forests, bogs, and mountains. This is confirmed by a tradition current there to this day, that at a time since the Plantation it was possible to walk across the county from Coleraine to Magherafelt — a distance of some twenty-five miles—on the stumps of cut-down trees.

This was not exactly a land flowing with milk and honey to men brought up among the park-like pastures of southern England, who were naturally the settlers first brought to it by the London companies; and it is not surprising to learn that they did not like it, and mostly took the first chance that presented itself to return to merrier England. The "inland" Scots were of sterner stuff and used to a sterner climate, and they soon flocked in to take the barns and farms deserted by the English settlers. So completely did they take their place that North County Derry is at this moment one of the most Scottish and most Presbyterian districts in all Ulster.

The London companies, in fulfilment of the conditions of their grant, not merely planted the lands with "inland" Scots, but proceeded also to erect a walled city on the ridge of land west of and a few miles from the mouth of the river Foyle—a river which the great Lord Lawrence, when at Calcutta administering the affairs of an empire, declared with filial piety to be very like but much superior to the river Hooghly. The walls were completed in 1617. Originally they were some twenty-four feet high—they are now about fifteen—and some twelve feet thick, and about a mile in circumference. They were armed with a few guns, but their chief defence was the stout hearts of Derry's citizens; and those hearts were stout enough to hold them safely, not merely against the Irish rebels in the sixteen-forties, but against the guns of King

James's soldiers and the skill of King Louis's generals in 1689. To the Loyalists of Derry those old walls are sacred, because never since they were built has an enemy of England fought his way within them. It is they which have kept Derry what her citizens still proudly call her —the Maiden City, unviolated by the force of any foe of theirs, of their religion, or of their race.

It is not my intention to trace the course of the struggles of Derry against the Irish rebels in the sixteen-forties, nor of the much more desperate struggle against James's forces in 1689. The tale of the latter has been told once and for all time by Macaulay, who, if he cannot tell a simple story simply, can tell a splendid story splendidly. But there are a few incidents which preceded the siege to which I wish to draw attention, because, as I have already said, they throw, I think, some light on the present opinions and past acts of the Ulster Loyalists of to-day.

In the winter of 1688 the Loyalists of Ulster were convinced that a party in England was determined to subject them, their lives, liberties, and religion, to a people whom England had made their and her enemies. There was little doubt but the conviction was well grounded. James II., in his insane desire to be more papist than the Pope, had appointed Tyrconnell, an Irish Catholic, Lord Deputy; had substituted for the Protestants Irish Catholic Judges, and had raised an Irish Catholic army, which was instructed to keep the Ulster Scots and English quiet, and was intended to keep the Scots and English at home quiet too. Not seeing any chance of protection from Great Britain, the Ulster Scots and English prepared to protect themselves.

The two fortified cities of Ulster were Carrickfergus and Londonderry. Carrickfergus was held by a garrison of Tyrconnell's. By an accident Londonderry was not. When Tyrconnell heard of the preparations of the Ulstermen, he thought the sooner it had a garrison the safer things would be in the North. He directed the Catholic Macdonnell, Earl of Antrim, to raise a regiment from among his Highland and Antrim tenants, who were all Catholics, and take possession of Londonderry in the name of King James II., then unquestioned King of Great Britain and Ireland. Macdonnell proceeded without delay to obey these orders.

On the 7th December 1688 news was received from George Canning of Garvagh,[1] and Phillips, a former Mayor of Londonderry, that Macdonnell's men were approaching the city,

[1] Ancestor of the great George Canning, Earl Canning of the Indian Mutiny, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe of Constantinople fame, and of the present Lord Garvagh.

and that there were rumours abroad that there was to be a general massacre of Ulster Protestants on the 9th inst. Alderman Tompkins, the acting Mayor of Derry, was much upset by this information. He consulted the clergy as to what he should do. Their advice was divided: the Presbyterian minister advised him to close the gates against Macdonnell's host; the Church of Ireland advised him to do no such thing, as it would amount to an open act of rebellion against their lawful King.

While the acting Mayor was still consulting and hesitating, the Macdonnell soldiers were approaching. At length, before any decision had been come to, they appeared on the east bank of the river Foyle, opposite the gate in the walls of Derry called the Ferry Gate. Some of the officers of Macdonnell's army crossed by the ferry to present their credentials. After them trooped a number of their rather motley soldiers. Meanwhile, the acting Mayor and the city authorities continued to consult and hesitate, while the citizens watched with anger and apprehension the Irish soldiery crossing the river Foyle and approaching nearer and nearer to the Ferry Gate. At last it was clear if nothing was done these wild Redshanks would soon be within the city. Thirteen young apprentices determined to settle matters themselves. Drawing their swords, they rushed to the Ferry Gate and closed it in the face of their lawful King's troops; and then mounting on the walls, they proclaimed that they would die before they permitted a man of them to enter the city.

It was now Macdonnell's turn to hesitate. On reflection he came to the conclusion that his instructions had scarcely authorised him to commence a civil war, so he withdrew his regiment and communicated with Dublin. Negotiations between the Derry citizens and the King's Government followed. The citizens absolutely refused to admit Catholic soldiers. The Government compromised by offering to garrison the city with a Protestant regiment. The offer was accepted, and a Protestant regiment entered the city, whose colonel, Lundy, was made Governor. This famous Shutting of the Gates was the first act of the great drama of the Siege of Derry.

Shortly after the Shutting of the Gates, William III. landed at Torbay, and James II. fled to France. The moment the news of this reached Derry the citizens and soldiers proclaimed themselves Williamites; and when William was informed of this he accepted their allegiance, confirmed Lundy in the Governorship of the city, and promised the citizens help to maintain their walls against Tyrconnell and the Irish army which remained loyal to James.

The first act of the great drama of the Siege of Derry was the revolt of the citizens against an officer of James when James was King. The second was a revolt against

an officer of William when William was King. It is usual to describe Colonel Lundy as a traitor: in my opinion he was nothing of the kind. He was simply a fairly competent soldier who, after considering the position of things in Derry from a soldier's point of view, came to the conclusion that the city was not capable of being defended against a regular army. This view is confirmed by the fact that when William sent the help which he had promised the Derry citizens, the two colonels who commanded, after consulting with Lundy, agreed that the walls of the city could not resist regular artillery, and that, moreover, the city itself was commanded by some of the surrounding hills. Accordingly, they withdrew with the two regiments which William had sent to help Lundy to make the best terms he could with the Irish. It is true that after a Parliamentary inquiry, both of these officers were deprived of their commissions for acting thus, and Lundy himself was excepted from the indemnity granted for acts done during the civil war; but no attempt was made to prosecute Lundy for treason; and we must remember that the decision of Parliament, that Lundy and the colonels should have defended Derry, was arrived at only after Derry had been successfully defended.

Whether Lundy's decision to surrender was right from a military point of view or not, the people of Derry would not listen to it. There were thirty thousand men and women crowded within when James's army drew up before its walls. Many of these had burnt their homesteads and fled to the city, determined on no terms or conditions to submit to the Catholic King and his Irish army. Among the last of these to arrive was a troop of horse led by Adam Murray, a scion of the Murrays of Philiphaugh. When he reached the gates, Lundy was treating for a surrender, and he refused to let Murray and his troop enter. As before, the citizens took the matter into their own hands. They threw open the gate and, in defiance of the Governor's orders, admitted Murray and his troop; and to his declaration that he was determined to fight to the death, they replied with a thunderous shout of "No surrender!"—since then a watchword among Ulster Loyalists.

Next day Lundy, disguised as a common soldier, and with a pack on his back, stole out of the city and made his way to Scotland, and the bombardment of Londonderry by James's artillery began.

Macaulay has, as I have already said, told the tale of that long and terrible siege once and for ever. Those who wish to read it will find it in the twelfth chapter of the second volume of his 'History of England.' I will here merely cite a few sentences from his concluding words:—

"Five generations have since passed away; and still the wall of Londonderry is to the Protestants of Ulster

what the trophy of Marathon was to the Athenians. . . . The wall is carefully preserved; nor would any plea of health or convenience be held by the inhabitants sufficient to justify the demolition of that sacred enclosure which, in the evil time, gave shelter to their race and their religion. . . . The anniversary of the day on which the gates were closed and the anniversary of the day on which the siege was raised have been down to our own time celebrated by salutes, processions, banquets, and sermons. . . . It is impossible not to respect the sentiment which indicates itself by these tokens. It is a sentiment which belongs to the higher and purer part of human nature, and which adds not a little to the strength of States. A people which takes no pride in the noble achievements of remote ancestors will never do anything worthy to be remembered with pride by remote descendants. Yet it is impossible for the moralist or the statesman to look with unmixed complacency on the solemnities with which Londonderry commemorates her deliverance, and on the honours which she pays to those who saved her. Unhappily, the animosities of her brave champions have descended with their glory. The faults which are ordinarily found in dominant castes and dominant sects have not seldom shown themselves without disguise at her festivities; and even with the expressions of pious gratitude which have resounded from her pulpits have too often been mingled words of wrath and defiance."

Less than two generations have passed away since Macaulay wrote these sentences, but during that short time the face of things has been changed. The descendants of the men who defended the walls of Londonderry are no longer a dominant caste or a dominant sect within them, and the walls which they defended are regarded as so little sacred by the race for whom they were defended, that when a competent military authority forbids the descendants of their assailants triumphing over and upon them, he is held up to opprobrium by that race's press.

I have said that these two first acts in the terrible drama of the Siege of Derry are capable of throwing some light on the present opinions and past acts of the Ulster Loyalists of to-day. In order to obtain that light we must consider the nature of the acts of the Derry Loyalists and the nature of the views of the Ulster Loyalists of to-day, and the justification for them both.

Now the acts of the Derry Loyalists which I have described were both acts of open rebellion: the shutting of the gates of Derry against Macdonnell was a flat defiance of the authorised officer of King James; the opening of the gates of Derry to Adam Murray was a flat defiance of the authorised officer of King William; yet both were later formally approved by the Parliament of England. More-

over, both proved turning-points in the struggle of England against King James for the liberties of England. That struggle was but a prelude to the still greater struggle against King Louis for the liberties of Europe. If Derry had followed Lundy's lead, and James, who was but Louis's pawn, had become supreme in Ireland from Cape Clear to the Giant's Causeway, no one can guess what would have been the result of that terrific contest between the King of France and the peoples of Europe which was ultimately decided on the bloody fields of Blenheim, Malplaquet, and Oudenarde, and which freed the world from the dominance of a military despot. The shutting and the opening of the gates of Derry walls then do not need vindication: they are justified by the result.

Now, as to the nature of the views of the Ulster Loyalists of to-day, the primary fact is this, that the average Ulster Loyalist is to-day convinced, as completely as was his ancestor in 1688, that the one cause of Irish Nationalism is hatred of England and hatred of Protestantism, just because it is England's religion, and the one object of Irish Nationalism is the Independence of, and the supremacy of the Church of Rome in, Ireland. He regards the professions of moderate Nationalists that they will be contented with Dominion or some other form of Home Rule, and will extend absolute equality to Protestants, as mere dishonesty: any concession of power they get through these professions he believes they will use to extort more until the sole question between Ireland and the Empire is civil war or separation. And he gives his reasons for this belief.

Look, he says, what Nationalists of the past the people honour. Can you find in a Nationalist bookseller's a biography of a moderate leader? Are not all the monuments raised by Nationalists monuments to rebels who fought and died for Irish Independence or worked for Catholic claims? It may be said that Parnell's monument is an exception. It is only an exception, they say, because he, while posing to Englishmen as a moderate man, was in Ireland explaining that his moderation meant nothing to Nationalists: his acceptance of any Home Rule scheme did not bind them; and the Ulster Loyalists point to the inscription on his Dublin monument in confirmation of their views. That inscription is an excerpt from one of his speeches. "No man," it runs, "has a right to fix the boundary to the march of a nation. No man has a right to say to his country, Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther. We have never attempted to fix the *ne plus ultra* to the progress of Ireland, and we never shall." Parnell, they say, kept Irish Nationalists in favour of the Constitutional movement by assuring them that its object was merely to humbug the English. Once they got Home Rule they would be in a position to get more, in

spite of any paper limitations on their powers, to do as they liked.

Humbugging the English has always been not merely a device but an amusement of the Southern Irish, Protestant as well as Catholic. The portentous seriousness with which the self-contented Englishman regards himself induces this practice. I think it is Sir Jonah Barrington who tells the way the Irish Bench and Bar humbugged Lord Redesdale when that gentleman, fully charged with his knowledge of law and his own importance, first, as Lord Chancellor, entertained them to dinner. After the meal he proceeded to instruct them on several things, and among others he dilated on the importance of one's dog-teeth. The Bench and Bar listened to him intently, and when he had finished, one of them remarked in a low and distressed voice that he had lost one of his dog-teeth, and hadn't so far noticed any difference; but after what the Lord Chancellor had said, he would call next morning on his dentist and have a new one. Then Lord Redesdale told the company at great length how in his youth ladies of high degree went in their hoops to the Cock Pit in Westminster to see the cock-fights. Thereupon another guest ventured the suggestion that this practice accounted for the expression Cock-a-hoop. Lord Redesdale reflected, and said that that derivation had never occurred to him. Then he told how in his youth he used to skate on thin ice with perfect safety, since he always had bladders fastened under his arms. "Ah, that, Lord Chancellor," observed Lord Norbury, "is a common practice here; it is what we call blatherumskate," which expression, so far as it can be translated into English, means pompous bosh. Lord Redesdale was greatly interested to learn that the practice existed in Ireland. Then devoting his attention to the Bar, he said to a distinguished leader called O'Farrell, "Your family, Mr O'Farrell, are well known in County Wicklow." "Too well known, my lord," replied Mr O'Farrell in a depressed tone. "And very numerous, aren't they?" continued Lord Redesdale. "Well," said Mr O'Farrell very deliberately, "they once were, but just now the name is hardly known in the country, because, ye see, my lord, so many of them have lately got hanged for sheep-stealing."

"'Ods fish," cried witty Nell Gwynne, when she found that King Charles II. had not money enough to pay for a supper to which he had entertained her, "what sort of company have I got into?" Lord Redesdale, if he had had the wit to do so, might have said the same; but all he did was to gaze about him in amazement. As he did so, however, it suddenly dawned on his mind that the whole company was laughing at him, and the evening ended in dulness and constraint.

Possessed then by the con-

viction that all the professions of moderation and toleration on the part of the Nationalist leaders were mere devices to mislead English opinion, the Ulster Loyalists, in the winter of 1913, found themselves faced with a Bill which would shortly become an Act to hand over the whole government of Ireland to the Nationalists. They were convinced, as their ancestors were in the winter of 1688, that a party in England was determined to subject them, their lives, liberties, and religion, to a people whom England had made their and her enemies; and as their ancestors did before them, they began to prepare to protect themselves. They formed a volunteer army some hundred thousand strong, which they proceeded to arm and drill. The Liberals and Nationalists screamed that they were traitors, since they were defying the decisions of the ruling party in England. The Ulster Loyalists were unmoved: they remembered that their ancestors had defied the ruling party in England before, and had afterwards been thanked for doing so by the English Parliament, and had by their action saved the liberties not merely of England but of Europe. They continued to arm and to drill their volunteers. The outcry among the Liberals of England and the Nationalists of Ireland grew louder and louder, and at last the Government called upon the British Army to suppress this new rebellion. The British Army declined to fight the friends of their country for the benefit of the enemies of their country, and the Liberal Government in a panic declared that coercion of the Ulster Loyalists was a course not to be imagined. Well, it had become so before the Government had made this declaration.

Suddenly the Great War was sprung upon the world. The Ulster Volunteers joined up in tens of thousands to defend the British Empire against German military despotism: it was a repetition of the struggle for European freedom against French military despotism of two centuries before. They joined up with misgivings, for all of them knew the two maxims on which Irish Nationalism has for centuries acted—that England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity, and England will concede anything to disorder. These maxims have been the curse of Ireland: the first, because it is false; the second, because it is true. Still the Ulster Loyalists felt assured that they would sooner or later act on one of them, and they feared what the consequences would be if this occurred when the British Army and the Ulster Loyalists were out of Ireland, fighting a life-and-death struggle for the Empire and human liberty.

As might have been expected, the Irish Nationalists acted first on the first maxim, and their rebellion was stamped out as usual in blood and ruin. Would it have been stamped out so easily if the armed opposition of the Ulster Unionists had not prevented the establishment of an Irish

Parliament? What would the situation have been if an Irish Parliament had been established; the Nationalist Volunteers had been armed and drilled as Mr John Redmond proposed; and then an Irish Republic in alliance with Germany been proclaimed? The only valuable part of Mr Lloyd George's speech in forecasting a Bill for a new "settlement" of the Irish Question supplies an answer: The war would probably have ended in a German victory. And who can say that this situation would not have arisen? The Ulster Loyalists predicted that when a chance of success occurred the bulk of the Nationalists would throw aside the appeal for Home Rule and declare for an Independent Ireland; and that is what, in fact, they did. Has Ulster's opposition —though once again open rebellion—once again saved the Empire and Europe from a military despotism?

I have lately been spending some weeks in Ireland, and have inquired, so far as my opportunities permitted, into the state of affairs and of opinion there. As to the state of affairs, the Sinn Feiners are now relying on the second of their maxims—that England will concede anything to disorder. Disorder prevails over all the South and West of Ireland in its ghastliest form. Murder is abroad over the land, and terror prevents the punishment of the murderers. The night before I reached Dublin a policeman had been shot dead in one of the busiest streets in the heart of the city. It was not a single shot and a hurried rush away of the assassin. Four shots, with a long interval between the third and fourth, had been fired, and scores of people must have seen the tragedy. Yet not one of them could give even a description of the murderer. The only witnesses who could do so were two soldiers, who were looking out of a window on the other side of the street. That is a sample of the state of affairs there.

As to the state of opinion, what struck me most was the amount of respect—I might almost say sympathy—which the Loyalists showed for the Sinn Feiners: in fact, if the Sinn Feiners could only be persuaded to give up privy assassination, I would say sympathy out and out. When I asked the reason of this I always got the same answer: "Well, you see, they are at any rate honest; they are not asking for what they don't want, like the Constitutional Home Rulers: they demand the end of English rule in Ireland, and that rule has become so brainless that some of us can't help thinking that no other rule could by any possibility be much worse." This, then, is the effect on many honest Loyalists' minds of a system of government which consists of unlimited licence tempered by bombardments and military law. Will the English people ever adopt permanently the method of Lord Salisbury,

which consisted of firm government tempered by remedial legislation, and which made Ireland the most orderly country in Europe, and Mr Balfour the most popular Irish Secretary in history?

I need say nothing about Mr Lloyd George's new scheme for the "settlement" of the Irish Question, save this: earlier schemes, of which we have had three, were not repudiated by everybody concerned until at least they were discussed: his fell still-born from his mouth. Nobody I met in Ireland would take the trouble even to denounce it. "Noble spirits war not with the dead."

A fear which I found possessed many of the higher minds in Ireland, was that the present state of affairs must end in a new reconquest of Ireland. Sooner or later, they thought, some English Government—and with the prospect of a Labour Government coming nearer and nearer, sooner rather than later—will give Ireland a Parliament with extensive powers. Sooner or later that Parliament will proclaim the Independence of Ireland, and following the maxim that England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity, that proclamation will most likely take place when England is struggling in the midst of a mighty war. Now, physical facts compel England to control Ireland in time of war. The discovery of America, the Land of the Free, as Irish Nationalists call her, was the greatest impediment ever met to Irish freedom. Before its discovery, and before the Portuguese found their way round the Cape, Ireland was only a breakwater between England and the ocean; since then, she is a barrier between England and the world. As Roger Casement pointed out, she lies athwart English trade-lines, as Great Britain lies athwart German trade-lines: any one who controls her harbours can destroy England's commerce. Before these discoveries, when the bulk of English commerce crossed only the North Sea and the English Channel, English statesmen took little interest in Ireland. After them, they saw that the control of Ireland was vital to the life of England, and it was their anxiety to ensure this control which led to the wars and confiscations and plantations which have constituted the tragedy of Ireland. Is the present demand for Irish control of Ireland to lead to another dreadful act in that long tragedy?

THE LITTLE ADVENTURE.

BEING THE STORY OF THE RUSSIAN RELIEF FORCE.

BY GILBERT SINGLETON GATES, 46TH R.F., R.R.F.

VII.

"LIAISON." Perhaps the Navy has a deeper appreciation of the true meaning of the word than the Junior Service. That, after all, may be attributed to the surfeit of "liaison" which the Army experienced during the years of Armageddon.

Fortunately for us, many sailormen came to live on shore. The intricacies of the Russian dwelling completely mastered and mystified them. The deceitful nature of a Russian loft lies in its planked floor. If one treads on the plank nearest the door, the immediate result is the upsetting of the lime-juice jar in the far corner. But as the liquid merely trickles down through the floor on to the backs of the sheep who happen to live beneath, it is a matter of small concern to the experienced dweller.

After some days of living in lofts, it became clear to our naval comrades that the failings of Russian floors were really a trivial matter compared to the immersion of a sixty-pounder gun.

The Navy on the Dvina excelled themselves in the matter of the sixty-pounders. There were only two of these, and one suffered somewhat from its prolonged baptism in the river.

The Royal Engineers, assisted by large numbers of Russian soldiers, succeeded after great effort in loading Number One gun from the beach on to the deck of a river lighter, H.M.S. *Oildrum the Second.* The tug *Levic,* a strangely obstinate tug by nature, proceeded to tow the loaded lighter up river. On the Dvina, whatsoever the Services propose, native tugs and the skippers thereof invariably dispose. The *Levic,* with true Russian nonchalance, became too exhausted to tow the *Oildrum* close inshore.

Lengthy consultations of artillery, engineer, and infantry officers ensued, interrupted at intervals by sudden squalls of violent Russian from the *Levic's* captain. Finally it was agreed to pull the lighter ashore by ropes. These were affixed to the *Oildrum.* Every available man on the beach was commandeered to pull.

The strain began.

This sudden effort aroused the torpid *Levic.* She made an expiring attempt, which, instead of producing a favourable result, merely caused the entanglement of the ropes in

some of the numerous angles of the *Oildrum.*

With consistent dignity and grace, the sixty-pounder slid into sixteen feet of Dvina river, where it disintegrated into its various component parts.

After many days, the Navy plus divers and cranes fished up the gun. It was successfully reassembled, and, as a reward for their work, the sailors were allowed to drag the gun some thousand yards or more, use it on the enemy, and drag it back again.

Being at war, one had to observe the results of the shooting of the guns. After much practice the naval gunlayers appreciated the art of hitting some target in front by aiming at a stick behind. It puzzled them at first, but eventually it was regarded as a sound method, and not merely a mad Army fantasy. The naval observers cast some aspersions on the strength of the R.E. ladders which led to the observation post (I regret to say, in a church), and their final arrival in what they termed "a glorified dovecot" led one to regard them as super-critics.

As they carefully explained to the artillery observation officer, the dovecot was hardly as comfortable as the turret. If one moved a foot to the right, one fell down the ladder. A foot to the left, and the floor either collapsed or threatened to do so. Mending the floor was quite out of the question. This on the authority of the R.E. corporal, who worked the telephones in the dovecot. The Royal Engineers on Troitsa beach had unfortunately exhausted their supply of nails. They had indented on the base for supplies, but the nail barge was fast aground. It was therefore manifestly impossible to mend the floor.

"Well, here you are, old thing. In front of the village—can you see the village?—and to the left there's a yellow sandbank."

The speaker is the artillery liaison officer. The two naval officer observers strain to see the yellow sandbank.

"There's a trench all along the top of it."

That they take for granted, not being able to perceive any signs of a trench.

"Now that cutting in the middle is a road coming down. On the left of the cutting there's a black slit. See it? That's an 'Emma G' post. Now go right about 300 yards. You see a clump of trees with a cemetery on top just to the right of it."

The bewildered observers, after searching the horizon for a cemetery above trees, faintly murmur an affirmative.

"There's another 'Emma G' in a blockhouse on the edge of the bank close to the trees. A trench runs around the back of the trees to the village, and there are blockhouses all along the cemetery."

The complete enemy dispositions having thus been revealed to the observers, they agree that their efforts shall be directed toward shelling the "Emma G" on the left of the cutting. Three o'clock in

the afternoon is fixed as the time for the shoot.

The hour arrives. Once more the observers are in the dovecot. The landscape is unchanged, the target as obscure. A herd of cows are browsing on the edge of the sandbank, while an elderly Russian peasant wanders in front of the cutting. There is frantic buzzing and recrimination over the telephone.

"Is Number One ready yet?"

"Another five minutes."

During the interval the cows wander down to the river, drink, and commence to return. The old peasant leads them homeward. More excitement on the telephone. The gun is ready. Range and deflection having been corrected, there follows the order to fire.

The church tower rocks, and a colossal cloud of black smoke appears about a hundred yards behind the retiring cows. The peasant and the cows disappear before the smoke-cloud vanishes.

"Up 400."

"Right-o."

"Fire."

Another cloud, behind the cutting this time. And so on. The fifth round drops about twenty-five yards in front of a house in the village. The smoke clears away. An old peasant woman, annoyed at the interruption, emerges from the house and gathers in her washing, which hangs on a line in close proximity to the last burst. Then she goes in again.

The amazing difference between the first shot and the last is attributed to the playful nature of the gunlayers. They are vehemently requested not to amuse themselves with the gun, but to keep to the same range, deflection, and target.

Long argument ensues, in which the gunlayers point out that they are firing at the same range and deflection as at the commencement of the shoot. If the gun misbehaves, it obviously is due to its long immersion in the waters of the Dvina. There being no gainsaying this argument, the Navy decides to go to tea.

Thus ends the day's shoot.

The versatility of the seamen was magnificent. Some of them lunched at Siskoe with a lovable Russian priest, a man possessed of a simplicity and charm that evoked admiration in even the most critical of observers.

Prior to luncheon, the father sang a long and monotonous grace in his own language. Through the interpreter he inquired if his gallant English guests sang their grace. The Navy rose to the occasion. They always sang their grace. If their host cared to listen they would do so.

With solemn faces, three naval officers and four military officers sang the old nursery rhyme—

> "Three blind mice,
> See how they run. . . ."

No one was more pleased than the priest, though his request for a translation of the grace met with a somewhat evasive answer.

VIII.

In passing, one must pay tribute to the officers and men of the Mercantile Marine, who played their part, and at times an unpleasant part, in the campaign.

The *Walton Belle*, before the fateful year of 1914, was a paddle-steamer at Margate. Eventually she arrived in the Dvina, and in an emergency was used to convey supposedly loyal Russian troops to deal with a difficult situation at Onega. The vessel was manned by unarmed Mercantile Marine ratings. The Russian troops were thoroughly equipped, and armed with rifles and Lewis guns.

On arriving at Onega—at that time in the hands of the Bolshevik mutineers—the first lieutenant with two men went ashore, and with a Lewis gun cleared the village in the vicinity of the docks. The loyal Russians, armed to the teeth, could not be induced to follow. Belaying-pins and other persuasive weapons finally resulted in a few going ashore. The first lieutenant, being then in possession of several Bolshevik prisoners, finding the Russians unwilling to follow, abandoned his attack. He realised, and very wisely, that it was hardly possible to capture the town with two other ratings.

The Bolsheviks, having now recovered from their alarm, counter-attacked, and the *Walton Belle* escaped from Onega under heavy shell and machine-gun fire.

On the voyage back to Archangel the four or five Bolo prisoners succeeded in disarming their guard, threw a bomb at the captain, and proceeded to clean up the ship.

They completely subdued the two hundred heavily-armed Russians. The situation was entirely in favour of the Bolsheviks till it was taken in hand by one of the Mercantile Marine ratings, who appeared on deck with a shot-gun and blew the heads off two of the mutineers, one with the right barrel and the other with the left.

This subdued the state of turmoil till the port was reached. Considerable excitement was created by her arrival. S.O.S. signals were being fired, and Lewis guns and rifles were being discharged on the unfortunate paddle-steamer.

A boarding party from H.M.S. *Fox* finally quieted the excited and mutinous Russians.

Our naval friends had many regrets in leaving Russia. They had hoped to get away all their ships, even the wrecked *Sword Dance*, but time and fate were against them. The *Sword Dance* struck a Bolo mine in June, just below Troitsa, and sank in fourteen feet of water. It was hoped, as the damage was all forward, to lift her and repair her at Archangel.

The stern was floated by fitting a cofferdam down to the main-deck and pumping out the after-part of the ship abaft the engine-room. The bows were afterwards lifted by a crane assisted by two large wooden lighters.

The operations were rendered most difficult by the absence of rise and fall of tide, and by the swift current which hampered the divers.

Unfortunately the damage from the mine proved more extensive than was expected, and it was found impossible to cover the damaged part with a padded canvas sheet and pump the vessel out—before the day fixed for the final evacuation from Troitsa in September.

As lifted, the ship, lighters, and crane drew no more than five feet nine inches, but as there was only four feet six inches of water on one of the shallows, there was in the end no alternative but to blow her up. And blown up she was with eleven electrically-fired depth charges.

But not before the captain of the ship had recovered his best tunic and his bottle of hair-oil.

The difficulty of the fresh meat supply was more easily solved by our naval friends than by ourselves. Our consciences were not so elastic. Cattle and sheep strolled about in a most tantalising manner in all parts of the line, save "No Man's Land." Animal sagacity may have been responsible for their avoidance of that area, yet they gathered in large numbers on the river banks. The natural result was a distinct difference in naval and military diets.

Only once in the campaign did we secure a cow. One with suicidal tendencies, or of too adventurous a disposition, succeeded in strangling itself in an intricate mass of barbed wire. Whatever its motives, the act of self-sacrifice was most deeply appreciated by all neighbouring messes. The event, however, brought forth copious tears from the unfortunate peasant owner—a war widow. Compensation eventually matured in the shape of a new cow, a gift which resulted in the kissing of the feet of any British officer who ventured in or near the gratified woman's dwelling.

It is not always easy to deal with the Russian peasant, as the D.A.D.S. and T., whose lot it was to sell surplus horses, can testify. To call the populace together, one warns all the *storastas* (headmen). The place of the sale is notified to them. Large numbers of bewhiskered Russian peasants gather at the appointed time. The first horse is displayed. The peasant desiring to purchase asks what price the seller is willing to accept. The latter names a price double that which he expects eventually to receive.

The peasant walks away and ponders. After some meditation he returns and offers about half of what he is prepared to give.

"Oh dear! No! no!" the seller answers.

A long explanation is at once commenced by the prospective buyer. He draws attention to the unfortunate weather that has been experienced, the failure of the crop, the abnormal size of his family—anything that will conduce to the consideration of a reduction in price. The actual price asked is never queried. But the tales of misfortune multiply.

The buyer retorts that the offer is absurd and walks away. Eventually the peasant returns and makes a fresh offer, which is again rejected. This performance continues, sometimes for several hours, till the Russian makes a fair offer for the animal, which is promptly accepted. Time is nothing to the Russian. To-morrow is as good as to-day. It is evident that a particular buyer means to secure a particular horse, and the only way to sell is to be untiringly obstinate, till he eventually offers a reasonable figure. And the Russian peasant is an expert at judging horses and their value.

Yet the peasantry is extraordinarily superstitious. The one curious example that came directly under my notice was in connection with the pigeon, though at the actual time I was ignorant of its significance.

We had been shooting duck on the left bank of the river in the early morning. Returning to Mutiny Village, we saw a number of pigeon feeding in the track ahead. The possibility of ownership deterred us from disturbing and shooting at them. Inquiries among the villagers produced the welcome news that the birds were no one's property and were wild. Proposals to shoot them, however, provoked a copious flow of tears from one peasant woman, who pitifully entreated us to allow them to live. All attempts to discover a reason for her entreaties merely resulted in more tears and cries of anguish. A few mornings after the same peasant woman was observed feeding the pigeons with dried peas. The incident passed from our minds.

Months afterward, I learned the explanation. The Russian peasantry, though outwardly most devout and religious, retain nevertheless several remarkable superstitious beliefs. One of the most prevalent is, that on death the soul of the departed passes into and for three weeks remains in the body of a pigeon. The bereaved relatives and friends, ignorant of the identity of the possessed pigeon, feed for the allotted time all pigeons in the village, in the earnest hope that they may give sustenance to the particular pigeon containing the soul of the departed.

The death of that pigeon means the complete death of the soul—why, I have never been able to discover. The peasant woman of many tears and sighs had had the misfortune to lose her son and her infant babe through shell-fire during the attack on Troitsa. Hence the tears and protestations—a singular example of

the persistence of an ancient superstition.

The blissful ignorance of the Russian peasant woman moved us alternately to laughter and despair. On occasions T.N.T. bombs were dismantled, and the empty brass sticks of the fuses and detonators were cast aside. The children of one village, discovering them, treated the tubes as English children treat barley-sugar sticks. Expostulations, gesticulations, and frantic appeals to the women of the village, tending to show that T.N.T. tubes were not really good diet for children, merely resulted in one mother producing a perfectly good Stokes bomb detonator, which her daughter Metia had been in the habit of sucking, and inquiring if it might be regarded as nourishing food.

IX.

The original plan of the Russian Relief Force had been clearly defined. Granted favourable circumstances and attendant good luck, it was proposed, in co-operation with the naval flotilla, to make a lightning advance down the Dvina river as far as Kotlas, effect a junction with the then victorious armies of Admiral Koltchak, hand over the northern line to the Russians, start them on a combined movement towards Petrograd, and then to evacuate *vid* Archangel, ere the freezing-up of that port. Admittedly it was an ambitious scheme, requiring no small amount of dash and vigour on the part of both of His Majesty's Services, as Kotlas is some 450 miles from Archangel. The period allotted for the complete operation was short. The advance was planned to commence on the first day of July, and all troops had to be down river at the base by the first day of October.

Three main factors contributed to the abandonment of the plan: Koltchak's failure; the Russian troops in the North; the sudden outcry in the British press for an immediate withdrawal.

Experience has shown that the Russian troops rarely, if ever, conserve all the advantages they gain in a successful attack. Once the enemy is routed, the pursuit naturally begins, according to all precepts of war; but there must come a stage when the advance goes beyond the limit of supplies, unless the services responsible are amazingly rapid.

The Russians, in a successful attack, invariably overstepped the mark, exhausted themselves, ran out of supplies, and, on account of the distances involved in the operations, placed their lines of communication in jeopardy. Then the enemy, falling back on his bases, and able to bring fresh troops into action, not only checked any further progress, but began to recover

lost ground. Koltchak retreated rapidly, and all hopes of reaching Kotlas vanished.

Of the defection of the Russian troops I have perhaps said sufficient. They presented one of the most difficult factors in the whole of the campaign.

At the same time strong pressure was being exercised through certain channels in England for an immediate withdrawal of all troops from North Russia. Evacuation in the face of the enemy, particularly when the enemy is thoroughly cognisant of the movement, is a difficult proceeding. Arm-chair critics, and there were many such in England at that time, fail to realise the terrific responsibilities involved in bringing away troops from a theatre of war in face of the enemy. Three hundred miles of river separated the force from the port of embarkation. The villages on the banks were inclined to be pro-Bolshevik. If the demagogues, who at this period were shrieking "Evacuate Russia!" to the Government, had even for twenty-four hours been present on the Dvina, it is possible that, despite all their stubbornness and ignorance, they might have realised the difficulties of the situation, and possibly the folly of leaving North Russia to herself. It does not come within my province to say which of the three factors wielded the greatest influence in the abandonment of all our plans in North Russia, but it is a convincing fact that the last of the three reasons I have given did, unfortunately, result in a veritable clearance of the northern country.

In addition to these reasons, however, there were others more immediately concerning the forces engaged on the river. Enemy minefields were considerable and dangerous. The absence of rise and fall of water resulted in mines being laid faster than they could be swept. Heavy losses had already been incurred in clearing the river from Tulgas to Troitsa, and the operation had extended over seven days.

Behind the enemy's minefields lay his flotilla. He had not suffered greatly, having no mines to deal with. His way of retreat was free. On the British side there was no railway. The river was amazingly low, and transport by water could not be relied upon. Roads were bad, bridges unequal to the strain of heavy artillery (if we had had any), and teams of heavy horses did not exist.

All these difficulties made the prospect of an advance doubtful. In withdrawing, other equally important factors had to be considered.

Hundreds of very loyal Russians had been living in the security of the British protection for many months. To leave them to their probable fate on our evacuation was unthinkable. It was proposed (and eventually arranged) to give them an opportunity of leaving the country first, and to this end shipping and river transport had to be collected and utilised. The condition of

the river militated against this work to a great degree. Finally, it became necessary to evolve a very extensive plan for evacuation, the first move of which came into operation on August the tenth.

It was vital to strike a blow at the enemy's forces opposing us. There was much comment and criticism in the English press as to whether that blow was or was not offensive action and nothing else. In order to obtain freedom of movement for an operation so delicate as a complete evacuation, it was necessary seriously to cripple the enemy's fighting force. That was done.

The mining of the river, in order to obstruct and delay appreciably the inevitable subsequent advance of the Bolshevik flotilla, was necessary, as it would enable many ships of the British naval force engaged to get down river as soon as the depth of water permitted.

The question of the Russian troops — who would remain and, it was hoped, safeguard Archangel—was not lost sight of. Elaborate plans for the holding of successive lines were drawn up. These lines were held, and to-day the Russian troops have advanced in front of them.

These, therefore, were the problems confronting us at the commencement of August. The plans for a complete evacuation having been adopted, the details were carefully worked out, and the first stage, that of an offensive, culminated on August the tenth in a most amazing victory for the combined British and Russian arms.

The enemy at this time, with a strength of approximately 6000 men, eighteen guns, and hundreds of machine-guns and trench mortars, was holding a series of defences astride the Dvina river. His positions were strongly entrenched and wired, and his strong points consisted of log blockhouses, which proved to be considerable obstacles. On the right bank, his front line ran along the south bank of the Selmenga river, and on the left bank, in front of Nijni Seltso. The flanks stretched into the forest about two miles on either side of the Dvina. Another mile farther each way and all human habitation disappeared. Swamps, deep and impassable, took the place of the solid earth, and all operations in that area were out of the question. The depth of the position to be attacked was from eight to ten miles, and at this period the enemy's morale was good.

There was a remarkable disparity in the numbers on the opposing sides. General Sadleir-Jackson had but two battalions of infantry, neither of them at full strength, two companies of machine-guns, one company of Royal Engineers, and a brigade of Russian troops less one battalion. The actual fighting strength of a Russian battalion was about three hundred bayonets. Our past experiences with the Russians hardly justified a great degree of trust

being reposed in the brigade, yet, contrary to expectations, those employed in the battle on the right bank performed amazing feats of valour.

A frontal attack on the position was unthinkable. The Bolshevik was too alert and his defences too strong. The plan of attack, therefore, resolved itself into a complete enveloping movement of the whole of the defences of each bank, supported by a direct attack on the mine-fields by the naval mine-clearance service. Elaborate reconnaissance of the flanks was conducted. Incredible as it may seem, the enemy did not suspect an intention to outflank him. Scouts led by Russian wood-trackers actually traversed his flanks, and entered the villages miles behind his line. So poor was his observation on the right flank of his position that one British sergeant penetrated to within one hundred yards of his line, and observed humorously in his report that the sentry on duty was a Chinaman, who seemed to be asleep.

The whole success of the operation depended on the absolute accuracy of these patrol reports. From their observations, and the result of aerial reconnaissance, forest maps were compiled — maps that eventually were issued to all junior commanders— and upon these data the battle was fought.

Preparing for an attack in the midst of a peasantry frankly pro-Bolshevik, was attended by grave dangers of espionage. While the Russians were apparently well disposed towards us, at the same time they were aware of our coming withdrawal. It behoved them, therefore, to prepare for the arrival of the Bolshevik, and the manner of ingratiating themselves with the enemy was obviously to supply information as to the British plans and movements.

Applications to pass through the lines into "No Man's Land" were made daily. Their cows had strayed, they wanted to pick berries, or to gather mushrooms, or to cut wood for the winter. Stern prohibitions brought floods of tears. They would most assuredly perish in the bitter winter unless they had wood, hunger would overtake them if they had no berries, cows were not easily purchased. On the rare occasions that peasants were allowed to go, care was taken to thoroughly frighten them before they left. Whether the Bolshevik gleaned much information from those particular sources is difficult to say, but the fact remains that he did possess a very intimate knowledge of the actual organisation of the forces opposing him, though he was strangely ignorant of the plans of attack.

That was undoubtedly due to the measures taken to mystify the enemy and the local peasantry. Troops were sent nine and ten miles away to work on forest roads that would never have been used in any event. The British soldiery

was hardly pleased at this development of events. They were vaguely aware of the impending attack, and to be marched out into the forest and ordered to lay logs on muddy tracks was considered a crowning insult. The fall of every log was accompanied by appalling language, but they did their work well, and the Bolshevik was completely puzzled as to why we were repairing a road ten miles in the opposite direction to the front.

Bombing and shelling of the enemy's positions practically ceased a fortnight before the attack. A desultory shell was sent over from day to day, and the obvious conclusion that the Bolo jumped to was that we were too busy packing up to go home to bother about shooting at him. Alas! he was the more deceived.

The greatest need in the preparations, and the greatest trial, was transport. Country carts were the only vehicles available. A ukase went forth for a compulsory hiring from a vast area on both sides of the river. Two or three mornings before the attack the carts began to gather. It was a tremendous concourse. Men and women and children, uncles and aunts, cousins and nephews and nieces, all driving their own droshkies, swarmed round the habitation of the Service Corps officer responsible. They lived in huge marquees specially erected for them. Eleven hundred drivers, with eleven hundred horses and eleven hundred carts, were finally collected. No payment in money was made for all this transport; but they were paid in sugar, tea, and flour—at the rate of a pound of flour, a seventh of a pound of sugar, and a twenty-eighth of a pound of tea for every day that they worked with the force, the period reckoning from the day they left their native village till the day of their return.

And as these commodities were rare treasures, they considered themselves well recompensed.

(To be continued.)

THE INFORMER.

I. THE BETRAYAL.

THE first level rays of the sun had scarcely touched the highest peaks of the distant ranges when from the tall millet crop in the foreground there emerged the figure of a man. Slowly and cautiously he came out of the covert, and carefully he scanned the surrounding country before he advanced. Behind him lay the border-land, ridge after ridge of harsh inhospitable hills, devoid of trees, and, as regards the lower ones, redeemed from complete sterility only by scattered tufts of dried-up grass. The rising sun lit up, in the far distance, one great peak which, even now in the autumn, glistened whitely in its mantle of snow, but failed to disclose the forests which relieved its lower slopes, and the great ridge to the right and left of it, from the barrenness of the hills along the border itself. From the foot-hills the plain stretched away to the dim horizon, dotted with infrequent tree-clumps, and marked here and there with patches of ripening crops.

Faiz Ullah, the Wazir, had crossed the border-line during the night, and had lain till dawn in the millet field. He satisfied himself that no one was watching him as he emerged into the open, and quickly made his way to where the unmetalled road, which served the Border, ran, and turning towards the distant cantonment, which was his goal, commenced the long walk in, secure in the knowledge that the Government had no knowledge of such of his misdeeds as would make it unsafe for him to put himself within its power.

His movements were not, however, those of a man with an easy conscience. Without putting himself in the wrong by actually hiding, it was noticeable that he, as much as possible, avoided coming face to face with the few people who were using the road; and when he approached the cantonment and wayfarers became numerous, he betook himself to one of the many paths and made his way in, for the last mile or two, across country. On the road he would meet men of his own tribe coming and going; in the fields he would only meet the tillers of the soil, dwellers in British territory, which suited his plans.

In a shady corner of the little frontier station lay the Deputy-Commissioner's bungalow, situated in a pleasant garden laid out with lawns and flowering shrubs. Close by, well separated but conveniently at hand, was the *Kacheri*, where he saw those, whether British subjects or trans-frontier tribesmen, who had business

with him. It would have been a much more ignorant man than Faiz Ullah who did not know that it was to the *Kacheri* that he should go rather than to the private house; but if any one had been watching him, he would have noticed that he twice passed the gate of the court-house on the other side of the road, taking no interest in what was going on within, whereas, when he came to the gate of the bungalow, he looked keenly towards the house as if seeking an opportunity to enter. The chance presented itself as he turned in the road for the third time. A red-coated *chaprassi*, whose gold-lacing proclaimed him to be in the service of the lord of the district, was coming slowly up the drive with a bundle of papers under his arm. To him the Wazir quickly turned.

"I wish to see the Sahib," he said.

"Doubtless," came the reply. "Many wish to see the Sahib. Go to the *Kacheri* and in your turn you will see him. Here you may not come."

"Fool! Do you think that I do not know how to make a report in the ordinary way. Be quick and take me where I can speak quietly to him, for I have news for his ear alone, which he will be glad to know. I may not be seen at the *Kacheri*, where many Wazirs come. At least, if I cannot see him at once, take me where I can sit quietly in a corner until he comes. Nay, I have nothing for you, but you will be sorry if you do not let him know that I am here. Tell him it is Faiz Ullah of Raghza: he knows my name and has spoken with me before."

The man was so obviously in earnest, so urgent in his rough appeal, that the *chaprassi* decided to report his wish for a private interview, well knowing that many a man came to see his master whose presence it would be unwise to advertise. He therefore called to a fellow orderly, and leaving him to look after the Wazir in a secluded part of the garden, he himself went to take the Deputy-Commissioner's orders on the subject. The directions that he received were that the applicant, if he urgently needed a private interview, might wait until the morning's work was ended; and Faiz Ullah, well satisfied with gaining his point, sat down contentedly where he was in the garden.

Presently, as he waited and watched, the figure of an Englishman appeared from the direction of the bungalow, and made its way towards him at a leisurely pace. It was that of a youngish man, with a well-knit figure, dressed in an old tweed coat and a pair of grey flannels, with an alert sunburnt face and dark-grey eyes, that looked lighter than they really were against the tan of his skin. He walked forward slowly, with his hands deep in his coat pockets, talking to an Indian dressed in semi-European clothes. He took no notice whatever of the Wazir until, when quite close to him, the latter, who had risen to his feet, gave him the somewhat cavalier salutation

of the independent Frontier tribesman, who acknowledges no master. Then—

"What brings you into Daudabad?" he said, in a purposely casual tone.

"I come to tell a tale, Sahib. If you wish me to speak before the Tehsildar, I will do so; but this is a tale which must go no further, or there will be little profit in the telling of it."

"You may speak," was the reply. "There is nothing you can tell that the Tehsildar Sahib may not hear, nor much you can tell that he does not know already."

"Aye, Sahib. He knows much, and many go to him who fear to go to you. For me, I have come straight to you, and my tale he does not know, nor any on this side of the border but myself alone."

"Say on then," replied the Englishman, and, seating himself on the edge of a dry irrigation runnel, he leant forward with his chin on his hand and his eyes fixed on the narrator as he told his story.

"You know, Sahib, the village of Tut Kalan? The Hindus of the village are rich beyond the ordinary, and of the Hindus, Jiuna is the richest. Many a raider has thought longingly upon him, but he has been well protected by the *malik*, Khajir Khan. Now, it has lately come to our ears across the border that Khajir Khan is absent on a visit to his uncle at Mian Wali. His eldest son is with him, his brother, Shah Sowar, is dying or dead. A raid on Tut Kalan has therefore been arranged for to-morrow night, and the meeting-place is in a *nala* which leads up from the river to the Paran Pass. The men are to be there before dawn to-morrow morning, and will lie up in a cave at the head of the *nala* during the day and start out for Tut Kalan as soon as it is dark to-morrow night. The details of the place I can tell to any of your men who have been in that part."

"Yes," said the Deputy-Commissioner, "I myself know the *nala*, and can follow all you say. But tell me, who is the leader of the gang, and who are going with him?"

Faiz Ullah hesitated a moment before replying, and then, in a sullen shamefaced manner, he said—

"Makhmad Shah leads them, and with him are fourteen men of his old gang, and it may be one or two strangers."

"Makhmad!" ejaculated the Tehsildar quickly; "Makhmad is your wife's brother, is he not?"

"Aye, he is my wife's brother as you say, but what has that to do with you? I have told you what will be, and it is for you to say whether you will act on it and what the information is worth to you. You have all the plan as it was arranged in my own courtyard at Raghza. What I have told you is true. Now, give me what is mine and let me go."

"Not so fast," said the Englishman, who had sat thinking during the latter part of the conversation. "You have come of your own free will, and you may go when

you like. Your news is of the best, if it is true, and you know that your reward will be both ample and prompt when it has been proved; but if I am to act on what you say, I must have the whole story, and also the reason why you, who are closely connected with Makhmad, and who have raided with him before now, should have come to betray him. Nay"—as the Wazir started with a muttered exclamation—"think nothing of the word. I am but speaking plainly, that we may the sooner have done with talk and get to deeds. Tell me then your whole mind, that I may judge of the truth of your story."

"Very well, you shall have it. It is true that Makhmad is my wife's brother. Never have I walked in any but a straight path. You say I have raided with him, but be that as it may, I have fought with him, have shared my food and my blanket with him, and never thought to turn on him. But little has he treated me as a brother, and now would take from me what I have left."

He stopped speaking and walked a few paces this way and that across the shady lawn, as if to collect his thoughts, and then went on.

"He lent me money many years ago—lent it on interest on a bond, as if I had been a stranger and not his near relative. I was glad to have it at the time, and the terms were no worse than I could get from the *bania*. Then things went wrong with me. My enterprises — whatever they were, it matters not now — brought more danger than gain. My fields were unirrigated and rain was scarce just then. I had to sell a field to pay my interest and live. Then I planned a *kareze*, a subterranean water-cut, from the stream to my fields, which would make me independent of rain. It was to have cost me three hundred rupees, and once more I borrowed from Makhmad. The *kareze* cost me, not three hundred, but five hundred rupees. The water came, but so did the rain, and prices were low, and again I could not pay my interest. And then came Makhmad to me to say that he was hard pressed for money — before Allah he lies—and must have principal and interest of some, if not all, his money. He gave me a week for my answer, and I went and sat on the hill-top above my tower and thought and thought, looking down on the fields which were my father's and his father's before him. You used the word 'betray,' but what was I to do?"

He put the question, not as one who wants an answer, but as one who has put it to himself again and again, and to whom ever the same answer has come.

"Listen, Sahib, and I'll tell you the plan I thought of. I knew well the condition of things at Tut Kalan. I would urge Makhmad to make a raid in which I would join, telling him that if we succeeded in capturing Jiuna or any rich

Hindu, there would be money enough to tide over the evil day, and that if we did not succeed, I would sell or hand over to him such land as would pay what he wanted. But I knew that however well we did, it would only put off my difficulties, and I had my own plan. Makhmad has no heir nearer than my wife. I would let the gang assemble, but I would not be there. In my place would be the Government troops. The cave is a fine hiding-place and is little known. It has a convenient bolt-hole at the back. If, however, the hiding-place is known and the back door is stopped, there is little chance of escaping. Makhmad will be killed; or if captured, he is a British subject and has committed many murders. I and my land then will be free, for all he has comes to my wife, and if there is little else, there is my own indebtedness to him. There is the reward, too, whatever it may be. And so I have come, Sahib, and have told my story —that is all."

There was a silence of some moments when he had finished, which was broken by the Englishman.

"Well," he said, "I believe you and I will act on your information. But tell me, how did you get away without exciting suspicion, and what will you now do?"

"I am supposed to be buying a cow at Kai Khel, Sahib. It was known at Raghza that I had been bargaining for it, but I must be back at my home this evening, with a tale that the owner of the cow would not accept my price. It will then be easy to say I am tired with my walk and will follow those of the raiders who go from Raghza to the rendezvous. The only difficulty is how I am to get back in time, and for that, Sahib, you must help me by sending me out in a motor-car as far as the road goes. From thence, Allah helping me, I can cross the border and come into Raghza from the direction of Kai Khel, and none will know that I have not been there."

Some more conversation ensued, chiefly to ascertain the exact position of the cave the raiders had selected as their meeting-place, and to settle the amount and date of payment of the reward. The Wazir was then despatched in the Deputy-Commissioner's car, in charge of a police non-commissioned officer.

As the car turned out of the gate and passed from view down the road, the Tehsildar swung round, moved behind a bush and spat disgustedly: he was a Pathan at heart, in spite of the veneer of education and civilisation that had made him the right-hand man of his master in many a difficult and elusive inquiry. As he came back to his superior, he said in English—

"Forgive me, sir—but that such a man should come into your presence! Sir, you do not know all about that man, but I may tell you. For years he has lived on Makhmad, has borrowed money from him and never repaid him. It is for his

cause that Makhmad is now a poor man. He has ruined him, and now he has sold him. In the mission-school I heard the story of the man, Judas, who sold his master: here is another Judas, as bad as the one the Padre Sahib told us about."

"You do not doubt the story?"

"No, Sahib, the story is true without doubt, and you may give orders to get the constabulary ready. Even he, the son of a pig, was ashamed when he spoke. No, no, the story is certainly true."

II. THE ROUND-UP.

That evening, in a quiet corner of the club smoking-room, three men sat talking together. Here they might have been seen any evening, and their consultation would arouse no possible suspicion. They were the Deputy-Commissioner, the senior staff officer of the Brigade, and the officer commanding the Frontier Constabulary. Letters had been exchanged earlier in the day, and they had now met to settle the final details of the plan. A troop of cavalry, fifty infantry, two machine-guns, and one mountain-gun were the contribution of the regular force. The Constabulary would turn out forty rifles. Their *rôle* was to block the rear exit of the cave, while the regular infantry advanced up the *nala* at its front. The cavalry would be in waiting in case they were needed: the gun would save much loss of life by making the cave, a mere water-cut hole in the earthen bank of the ravine, untenable for the fated raiders. These latter were certain to be in cover some time before dawn. The troops, therefore, would wait until daybreak, and would then move up from the positions close by, which they had reached during the night. The regulars, who would attack up the *nala*, would defer their advance until they learned by signal that the Constabulary were in position. No reconnaissance had been possible, but reliable guides were easily obtainable. The dispositions were such as had been talked over and carried out many a time. The whole operation was little more than a matter of routine in that Station, whose chief responsibility was a long line of much-raided border, and a short conversation settled such points of doubt as remained to be discussed.

. . . . . .

The night was far spent, when a tall hill-man might have been seen making his way down a rough path in the lower foot-hills, on his way to the rendezvous. His fine physique, his bold bearing, and his alert carriage marked him for what he was, a leader of men. He followed the path in the dark without hesitation, as one who knew every turn and twist of it; and presently,

dropping down the steep clay side of the *nala*, he turned towards its upper end and halted before the black mouth of the cave, giving a low whistle, which he repeated twice. The answer came in three short whistles, and, without further hesitation, he entered the cave mouth, and, with a gruff greeting, sat down. Half the gang had already collected, and the remainder kept dropping in, in ones and twos, until the number was complete, with one exception. Day was beginning to dawn, and still one man was missing. A look-out had been posted at the mouth of the cave, and another at the second exit, and the rest of the party were sitting grouped near the entrance, some talking in quiet tones, others lying stretched in sleep.

Makhmad Shah was speaking to an oldish man a little apart from the rest.

"Faiz Ullah should have been here ere this," he was saying. "He did but remain behind to eat and rest a while after his journey to Kai Khel. He knows the road. What then has happened to him?"

"Did he mean to come?" the other asked shortly.

"Aye, surely he did. He has never failed me, and this raid is of his own devising."

"Why, then, is he not here, unless he knows that which makes him feel that it is safer to be away? I do not like it, Makhmad. He should be here. Say, are you sure you can trust him?"

"As myself," replied the leader without a moment's pause. "I have tested him, and can swear to him as to a well-tried knife. We have been as brothers these many years. He may come yet—though, indeed, it is late for that—or something has turned him from his purpose, but there is no doubt of him."

He spoke emphatically, as if to point his words, but a careful observer would have said that the emphasis was forced, and that it belied the troubled look that crossed his bold features; but almost at that moment there occurred that which turned his thoughts from the subject until later, when it came back to him with redoubled force.

"Makhmad. Oh, Makhmad!" came the voice of the outlook at the cave mouth in low insistent tones, which quickly brought the leader to his feet.

He made his way to where the other man crouched among the clay fragments that littered the floor.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Sepoys. I saw two *puggris* at the side of the *nala*. They showed a moment and then disappeared, but I saw them plainly—khaki with fringes of yellow and black. It is the regiment from the Station."

"Aye. They may know nothing about us though, and be but passing through on the way to Spin Killa post. Many a party has drunk at the stream here on its march."

"But these knew, Makhmad. They were hiding; one of them rose too high, and the other

pulled him down. Their faces were turned towards us, too, as men who search for something they have been told to look out for."

"Very well; that settles it," replied the other, and turning to the gang who crouched behind him in the dark entrance he gave his orders.

"You, Yusaf, and you, Mohammad Jan, join Bahadur here and watch the *nala*. We will make swiftly for the other door. If all is well there and you hear my whistle, come after us and we can get away safely. If not — the sepoys may be sorry they have found us before they are done with us."

They started down the cavern as quickly as the darkness and the rough floor would allow, but before they had passed half the fifty yards of its length they were met by one of the two men from the outlook at the back.

"The sepoys," the man gasped. "Many of them, and they have lined the bank along the edge of the *bajara* field. We cannot get out. They crept up close and ran across the open to the cover of the bank. They are the Border Police."

"Faiz Ullah has done this," said a deep voice in the darkness. "He and none other, the faithless son of perdition!"

"Yes," said Makhmad, fiercely. "It is Faiz Ullah, and some of us must escape to pay him back for his black deed. And now, listen, my brothers. This will we do. The five from Bannuzai and Serai remain here and guard the entrance. They cannot advance without crossing the open, and I do not think they will attack from this side; but be vigilant and brave. The other eleven and myself will fight at the main entrance. If either party is charged and can drive back the attackers, the moment may come when we can escape. In that case, all must flee to that entrance and fight their way into the hills. If not, we must kill as many as we can, and it may be that Allah will help his faithful ones to hold out till night and escape in the darkness: escape to kill the traitor with the dog's death he deserves."

The situation was wellnigh hopeless, but the raiders, with the stoicism, heroic in despair, which makes them such formidable antagonists when reduced to the last extremity, settled down to sell their lives dearly. The opening at the back sloped upwards and debouched on to an open plain. To attempt to break out from it, with a line of riflemen lying ready in good cover at short range, meant certain death. The main entrance was little better. It faced almost down the *nala;* to issue from it a man must first drop down to the bed of the *nala*, before attempting to find a way out, and turn in the direction of the hills, but the sides of the *nala* were certainly held by now. On the other hand, it was impossible to approach the cave mouth without exposing oneself to fire from those defending it, and Makhmad had at least

a faint hope of holding out until darkness should make a desperate sortie somewhat better than suicide.

He calculated, alas! without knowing of the mountain-gun that had been brought—a factor which changed the whole situation. The troops commenced operations by opening a brisk rifle-fire from different points, and under its cover the two machine-guns were brought into action. The raiders bravely tried to return the fire from the shelter afforded by the rough floor of the cave mouth, but while they had to find a target in men firing from cover and well extended, the attackers had nothing to do but keep up a heavy fusilade into the darkness of the gaping cavern. There were several casualties among the tribesmen, while their enemies escaped scot-free.

It was when the fire from the cave had been silenced that the gun first showed itself. It was brought into action at the farthest point of the *nala* from which the cave mouth was visible. The range was no more than three hundred yards, and at that distance the gun team offered an easy mark to the raiders. When the first shell rushed past them and burst far up the cavern beyond them, they saw at once that unless it were stopped their fate was absolutely sealed, and several of them again went forward to open fire, only to find that the pitiless hail of lead was impossible to face. Two of their number at once fell, dead or dying, and the remainder retreated to crouch against the wall, while shell after shell struck the walls or the roof of the cave, bringing down huge masses of clay and threatening at every moment to bury the surviving raiders. For a time they remained quiescent, dazed by the heavy percussions in that enclosed space and half-suffocated by fumes and dust, when five of the six men of the party at the cave mouth sprang up, as if guided by a single impulse, and rushed into the darkness in the hope of gaining the back entrance before the way was completely stopped by the ruin of the cavern.

One unwounded survivor alone remained at his post. When the others commenced their retreat, Makhmad, who was crouching near the entrance in a sheltered niche, which had till then escaped from the fire of the gun, sprang up as if to join them. A step he took and then stopped and returned to the place from which he had risen. Like a flash of light he saw what their situation would be if they succeeded in getting through the half-choked passage: the cave behind them blocked and no possible way of escape left but the narrow exit issuing on to an open plateau, ringed with eager enemies. Awful as his situation was, he preferred the chaos at the cave's mouth. There, if he escaped death from the shells, he might still sell his life dearly, and so he crouched down again to await his chance.

It was a terrible ordeal. The

systematic shelling was kept up until the cave mouth was almost obliterated. To those who looked on, it appeared as though no living being could have escaped death, and the leaders of the expedition presently discontinued the fire of the gun, and leaving a fringe of men to guard against any contingency in that direction, and postponing the search of the front of the cave until the living raiders who were known to be still at the back had been dealt with, the bulk of the infantry was moved away to reinforce the Constabulary.

A position was found from whence it was possible to shell the back exit. A very few rounds sufficed to knock it in, and it was then decided to rush the opening under cover of machine-gun fire. This was done without opposition, and the troops reached the ruined entrance, to find that the few surviving members of the gang had been buried in the falling debris; and the whole operation on this side might have been completed without loss, except for one man, the elderly raider whom Makhmad had treated as a confidant. This man, trying to retreat when the first shells had fallen at the back exit, had been hurled to the ground by an avalanche of falling clay. Pinned down by a heavy block which lay on his legs, and horribly wounded, past all hope of recovery, by a splinter of shell in the lower part of the body, he had contrived to half turn, with infinite agony, so that he could still face the shattered entrance. His rifle, the trusted companion of many years, was at his hand, and lying there he grimly awaited the approach of his enemies, fearing one thing alone — that his fast-ebbing strength might desert him before his dying vengeance was accomplished. He saw the heads of the attackers appear, silhouetted against the light, and held his fire. A pause ensued, and then one man, the officer in command of the troops, called out—

"I think it's all right," and dropped into the cave.

Still the old raider waited, until, the example once given, the officer was followed by several men. He could see them plainly enough for his purpose, and raising his rifle he laid it, for the last time, lovingly against his cheek. He fired, and the Sahib dropped. The sudden menace, where none was greatly expected, startled the sepoys into a momentary flinching, and gave the Wazir time for two more rapid shots. The next moment a burst of fire, which riddled him and rendered inaudible his dying cry of "Ali, Ali," ended the incident of the back exit.

In the meantime, Makhmad had, by some miraculous chance, escaped unhurt, beyond being severely bruised, and still lay in his little niche by the main entrance. He knew that his front was guarded, but he had been able to see enough to be sure that the bulk of his enemies had moved away. His scheme, obviously, was to wait until they

had their attention taken up by his companions, and then to make his dash. He planned his movements exactly as he lay waiting: the rush down to the *nala* bed, the run along under one steep bank where only the men on the other side could fire at him; the dart up a little side ravine which would bring him up to the open plain; and the zigzag retreat across the open for the shelter of a little patch of thorny scrub, to reach which would mean life and home, and, before all, vengeance on the treacherous hound who had sold him.

He waited, cool and calculating, until he heard the sudden burst of machine-gun fire which heralded the last attack, and then, rising swiftly, flung himself down the slope in front of the cave. The watchers, intent on what was happening beyond, saw nothing of his movement until he was well into the *nala* and was running strongly under the shelter of the left-hand cliff. The bullets began to fall thickly then; but a moving target is a difficult mark to an excited man, and he actually reached the tiny side defile still unwounded. In this he paused for breath. He dared not waste time, but he must cover the hundred yards of open at his best pace. Then, with a quick drawing of the breath, he sprang out on to the plain and darted this way and that for the covert. Almost he reached it, the bullets flicking up little plumes of dust from the sun-baked earth close round him, when at the last one unlucky shot took him in the right thigh, shattering the bone and hurling him to the ground. His rifle, to which he had clung, fell from his grasp and flew to a distance. His first instinct was to crawl to it; and this he commenced to do, dragging his broken leg behind him. But while some of the sepoys had remained to fire at him, one—a man whose pride was his speed as a runner—had elected to try and catch him, man to man, and he arrived in time to seize the rifle before Makhmad could do so. On this the wounded raider ceased his efforts, and sitting up, painfully awaited, with an utterly expressionless face, whatever was to come. It might be death then and there—there being no one in authority actually present—or it might be capture. At least they should see that they might kill, but that they, with all their force, could not make him afraid.

Thus, then, ended the Round-up, one of the few successes out of many attempts in this difficult game of the Frontier. The stretchers were brought up and the wounded officer and men, for luckily none was killed, were gently taken away to the nearest village, to be tended there till they could be transferred to the cantonment. Makhmad found himself treated just as gently as they, none harming him by word or deed, while the Medical Officer of the little force

showed the same solicitude in his care of him as of those of his own side. The bodies of the dead raiders were laid out in a pitiful row, and were identified by the political assistants present; arrangements were duly made for their burial, and the little force, tired but elated with success, marched off, to be the envied of their less fortunate comrades whose turn it had not been to go out.

III. THE RETURN.

That morning Faiz Ullah, the Informer, lay on one of the lower ridges, but high above the plain, watching intently the tragedy of which he had been the cause. He saw plainly the movements of the troops, transformed into marionettes by the distance, but clear to his view, in all their evolutions. He saw the advance to the back entrance, which betokened the last phase, and he saw the solitary figure of the leader in its gallant burst for the hills. The distance was great; but a thousand memories of bygone days helped him to recognise Makhmad. He saw him fall and his enemies surround him, and then at last he rose, and with a muttered imprecation commenced to make his way into the higher hills. The man's whole bearing betrayed the thoughts to which his mind had lately been a prey. His face was sullen and unhappy, and his eyes furtive, as they searched the ground to his right and left, while at the same time the close-set lips and the grim lines of his mouth showed that the gulf once crossed, he meant to play the game out to its bitter end. There was still the reward to draw. After so signal a success following his information, it would be large and promptly paid, and he saw a vista of prosperity stretching out before him. All suspicion, too, must be averted and his movements adequately explained: which was his immediate care.

Presently he halted, and plainly acting on a well-thought-out plan, he deliberately tore his voluminous trousers at the knee of his left leg. This exposed the knee below. Without hesitation he seized the skin of the limb, and stretching it upwards, he passed his long dull knife, with its razor blade of soft iron, across the surface thus presented, making a gaping wound, but injuring none of the deeper tissues. It was remarkable that his face hardly changed during the ordeal. The blood, which flowed freely, deeply stained the lower part of the garment, and made the illusion of a severe wound all the more realistic; and when the injured part had been carefully besprinkled with dust and a slight cut added on the brow, the man's purpose was fully accomplished and he continued his journey to Raghza, limping more and

more naturally as his hurt stiffened and grew increasingly painful.

It was well on towards midday by the time he reached the approach to the village. The inhabitants, who had heard the sound of the mountain-gun and had augured the worst from it, were many of them out in commanding positions, waiting and watching for any who might return; and when Faiz Ullah appeared, walking slowly and painfully, he was quickly surrounded by an eager crowd of questioners. Seating himself on a string bed in the first courtyard he came to, he told his story. He had left the village, as all knew, after the others, and had hurried down to be in time at the rendezvous.

"All went well," he told them, "until I reached the black ridge by the lesser pond. There, where the path runs along the steep edge, the whole ground suddenly caved in under my foot—whether it was a porcupine's hole or a fox earth, Allah alone knows—and I fell headlong down the slope. Little harm would have been done, but that my knee came heavily on a sharp stone and I received the cut you see."

Here he paused, and drawing back his clothing, exposed the wounded leg. It did not escape him that it was examined closely by more than one of the men around him, and he congratulated himself that he had made the cut wide and gaping. The slightest suspicion, he knew, would make his subsequent movements infinitely difficult, and must be avoided at all costs. He continued his tale.

"I went on even then, but before going far I knew that I could never make the raid and keep up. The leg was badly bruised, as well as being cut, and soon I gave it up and turned slowly homewards. Of the fight I saw nothing, but heard much rifle and machine-gun fire from the *nala*, as well as the big gun, and I fear greatly that our brothers have been captured. Also, I came all the way by the path, and none have caught me up."

A question or two was asked and answered, and the group began to break up, discussing the matter in twos and threes as they went. A woman, who had been listening from the background, gave a little gesture of despair and turned away, and from among the other men a young Pathan stepped forward and offered Faiz Ullah his shoulder to lean on. He was distinguished from the rest by his stature, and his fine keen face. As was the face of Makhmad, so was the face of this cousin of his. To him the captured raider had ever been as an elder brother, and he expressed his deep concern as the two went slowly up the stony path to where Faiz Ullah's house and tower lay, a little to one side of the village.

"I have been anxious about this raid from the start. Makhmad has had one or two near escapes lately, and I am not sure that there is not a traitor in the gang. How often have I tried to persuade

him to let the raiding be, and indeed he promised me that he would tell the gang that he had done with it after this raid. He has never been outlawed, and could have settled down to a peaceful life, but the gang looked to him as their leader, and he feared to be called a coward, he who has fought in the front of many a hard affair. Well, he has gone out once too often, and is dead now, for he would never leave while there was a man of his gang to be helped, and would never be captured while the life was in him."

"Aye, Khair Ali, I fear that he has surely been killed and we have lost the best. He has been kind to me, and long have we been close friends, and I shall miss him. And you—to you he has been a brother and more. You will mourn him as a brother indeed."

"Mourn him I will, not with the loud wailing of the women, but in the depths of my heart and for many days. Mourn him and revenge him, if his betrayer may be found. Nothing shall turn me from this purpose. It cannot be that the sepoys chanced on the gang: they do not pass that way once in ten years in such strength. Nay, Makhmad has been betrayed, and woe to the dog that did it, if I can but learn who he is."

He spoke with head thrown back and flashing eyes,—with no thought of the man before him, for his open nature was far from descending to such a level as his, in spite of his upbringing in the midst of lying and subterfuge. And so they entered Faiz Ullah's courtyard.

That evening, after their meal, Nur Jan, Faiz Ullah's wife, who had until then heard nothing of his adventures from himself, again asked him what had happened. She was still a young woman, and as yet the hard life and the harshness of the climate had had little effect on her good looks, and, though she was childless, her husband had always treated her with as much rough affection as the women of her tribe expect. This evening, however, she found him in an evil mood, and her query brought on a fit of unreasoning fury, which seemed to her unaccountable. Faiz Ullah had lain on his bed brooding on what had happened, attributing to a harsh fate the line of conduct he had assumed, and seeking thus to assuage the inward reproaches which harassed his mind. He was new to treachery, and the thing rankled as yet: later, when the fruits of his deed had been reaped and his mind had become accustomed to the facts, he would care little enough, for his soul was cast in a despicable mould. In the meantime his thoughts had worked him up to a state of sullen anger, and when his wife, whose reiterated questions had already exasperated him, brushing by the bed on which he lay, had touched his injured leg, which by now had become exceedingly painful, he seized her as she passed and, dragging her down, struck her brutally on the mouth with

his clenched fist. Nur Jan, a hill-woman hardened by toil, quickly succeeded in wrenching herself free from the recumbent man, and, raising herself, stood panting as she glared at him with her black eyes flashing. She had ever been a good and submissive wife to him, and until now, though he had struck her before, he had never done so with the concentrated hatred of the present attack. A pause, and then she turned and went away in silence, while the wretched man followed her with abuse and insult.

Nur Jan, puzzled and angered beyond measure by what had happened, thought long and deeply, reviewing all that had occurred during the last few days. It might well be, she thought, that his present palpable distress was caused by the thought of the loss of his well-tried comrades, and especially of Makhmad; but his wife had little cause, in her experience of him, to attribute to him so sympathetic a *rôle*. She thought in vain for a possible key to his behaviour, until it flashed across her mind how greatly Faiz Ullah would benefit by what had occurred that morning. She put it from her at first; but, in spite of herself, it recurred to her again and again as she lay trying to sleep and listening to the uneasy movements of her husband, whose injury and mental tension combined to keep him awake far into the night. Gradually the possibility of Faiz Ullah having been the traitor of the gang obsessed Nur Jan's mind, and when she dwelt on the almost certain fate of her brother Makhmad, and thought of how brutally her husband had struck her that night, her wild nature called up within her a surge of hatred which bade fair—if he were indeed a traitor—to obliterate such remains of her love as Faiz Ullah could still claim.

In the morning she behaved as if nothing had occurred, and spoke to no one of her thoughts. Her life with her husband fell back into its usual groove, and both in that household and throughout the village the excitement caused by the capture of the raiders died away, all the more quickly that the people were born and bred in the midst of sudden, violent death. A woman or two was widowed, a few children were made orphans, a shuffling of some of the village land took place, and the community settled back into the comparative calm of an existence in which to rob and be robbed, to kill or be killed for profit or revenge, was the ordinary rule of life.

IV. THE DISCOVERY.

The passing of the days brought to Faiz Ullah all that he had schemed to gain. Relieved of his debts and enriched by the reward of his infamy, which he was able to make a plausible excuse for going into Dandabad to draw, he saw

prosperity smile upon him on every hand. He increased his stock by degrees. His fields, plentifully irrigated and free of debt, paid him well, and his prospects became so good that he began to negotiate for a second marriage, which might provide him with that heir, without which his efforts to acquire property were of little lasting interest.

He might, therefore, have been well satisfied to abide content with what he had, but there are few men sufficiently strong-minded, when they have once learned of an easy way of making money, to limit themselves to a single venture. To Faiz Ullah the temptation presented itself in great force, and he quickly succumbed. Some fields near his own came on to the market, and he greatly desired them: the more so as in a generation gone by they had belonged to his forebears. To compass their price was quite beyond his resources, and many an hour did he think and plot how he might possess himself of them, only to give up the prize as beyond his reach.

And then the chance occurred. His part in the last raid had been so well played that no suspicion whatever rested upon him in the village. He was still openly consulted in all its affairs. Indeed, anything short of that position of trust would have meant that his very life itself would have been in constant jeopardy. It followed, then, that when some bold spirits in Raghza began to plan a raid, with some of the men of a neighbouring village, Faiz Ullah was given many of the details of the plan and was invited to accompany them. His cunning soul sprang at the chance, and while hesitating to assent, he contrived to get a fair insight into the intentions of the raiders. Eventually he declined to join them, pleading his prosperous condition, which had made it unnecessary for him to take the risk,—an argument which was fully understood.

He was, of course, by now aware that Makhmad had escaped death and was in Daudabad, in hospital awaiting his trial, but he trusted that he would receive such a sentence, even if he escaped the death penalty, as would ensure his future safety. In the meantime, Makhmad knew no more than all the world knew about his movements, and even if he gained speech with any from Raghza, he could but voice his unconfirmed suspicions.

Faiz Ullah, then, with a mind at ease about the past, and pretending to take no further personal interest in the projected raid, went about his usual avocations, until two days before the date for which it was planned. He then went off on a supposed business trip, such as he had frequently undertaken of late, to a distant village, and having made his plans quite public and being under no suspicion in the village, he felt sure that no one would connect his movements with the thought of treachery. He planned, however, without taking into account the passion

of a jealous woman. Nur Jan had long and bitterly pondered the taking of Makhmad and his probable fate. Within limits she was prepared to be loyal to her husband, but the fact that her brother had suffered had lent to the suspicion of her husband's treachery a significance which, if none related to her had been concerned, might have been wanting. More, her husband's cruel treatment of her on that fateful night had gone far to embitter her against him, and when now, in the day of his prosperity, he had planned to take him a second wife, and so to oust her from the place she had held so long, and when she thought of the hard years during which she had been a true and submissive helpmeet to him, the fierce instincts of her untamed nature cried loudly to her for vengeance—vengeance at all cost, even of misery to herself.

Faiz Ullah left the village in broad daylight and took his journey in a direction utterly unsuspicious, and his wife who watched him from their tower had at that time nothing to confirm her doubts. The next day she took Khair Ali's fiancée, Lalla, into her confidence, and on the pretext of cutting grass, the two went as far towards the British border as the guarded area, within which the women of the village could safely move without fear of being abducted, would allow. From there a view of the road to Daudabad, and of most of the paths leading to it, was obtainable, but the two women saw nothing of Faiz Ullah. The following morning—the morning of the night in which the raiders would leave their rendezvous to make the descent on the village they had selected for their object—the women were at their post of observation at dawn, and saw what one of them half longed and half feared to see. Faiz Ullah had intended to strike the hills before daybreak, but had been delayed in starting, and actually arrived at the borderline as the first light of the coming day was beginning to make itself felt. He was anxious to get into the hills, where he would easily find a place in which to hide during the day, and in the night he could make his way to the path by which he had left the village, and enter it during that day. When he reached the place at which he intended to find his way into the hills, he paused a moment to consider whether it were not already too late to attempt it; but in the end, arguing that no one from Raghza would as yet have got far enough out of the village to see him, he slipped quickly across the bit of open ground that must be traversed, and got into the cover of the stony ravine which was to form his onward road.

The two women, lying on the ridge which they had only just reached, saw the tiny figure far below, as it passed from cover to cover.

"I knew it," said his wife

in low fierce tones; "it is he, but until I have seen him close I will do nothing. Come, then, and let us see if it is indeed this husband of mine who has sold my brother and the men of the tribe."

They hastened across from ridge to ridge, moving laterally to intercept the line which the unconscious man was taking. Careful not to show themselves to one approaching from below, they succeeded in getting the nearer view of him which they wanted, where a deep defile in the hills allowed them to see almost perpendicularly below them the path the Informer was taking. They saw him appear, furtive and watchful; they saw him pause at a bend in the ravine and scan the path before him; they saw him hurry forward to the next bend and disappear from their view.

"It is enough," cried Nur Jan. "I know now, and never will I rest until the men know too, and deal with him as he deserves. Come, my sister, let us hasten, that I may prepare for him the welcome he has earned."

"Aye," said the girl, "hasten we must, and with all our speed. It may be that there is yet time to warn the raid. I would not believe, I would not believe, and we have let the men go to their death. If Khair Ali is at Raghza, I will send him after them. He is swift of foot, and may be in time; but the way is long. Ah! if only I could go myself; for I fear that by the time we get back we shall be too late."

"My task too needs haste," said her companion, "though it may be that he will not come in till the night or till to-morrow. At least he must go round by the upper path, or all will know whence he has come. Never fear, we will be ready for him when he comes, the thrice-cursed betrayer of the Faith."

Feverishly they hurried back, and reaching Raghza, they separated, Lalla going in search of Khair Ali, while Nur Jan, with hate and misery in her heart, went to tell the men of the village what she had discovered. She passed one on her way to her home, and telling him to bring such others as he could quickly find to her courtyard, she passed on, herself meeting two others, whom she took with her. In five minutes six men were gathered at her gate, listening to what she had to say. They heard with muttered execrations and violent gestures. In a moment their plan was made, the signal of Faiz Ullah's arrival agreed upon; and the men quickly dispersed, lest suspicion should be raised and any possible accomplice should contrive to warn him.

No accomplice had Faiz Ullah, but he had that which was better still for him—one who would have given her life for him. In a village near by, there lived, with a married sister of his, his old mother; and it happened that at this

time she was paying one of her frequent visits to her only son at Raghza. The old woman, grown prematurely senile, as is the way of her race, had largely lost her grip of things and lived for little but her love of her son and of her daughter's sons. None of the doings of the house she was now living in had become known to her, but the coincidence of her son's journey and of her daughter-in-law's absence from home for these two days had stirred some half-dead protective interest in her old brain and had made her watchful. When Nur Jan hurried back in evident excitement and, taking no notice of the old crone who crouched at the hearth, had related her story to the men of the village at the gate of her courtyard, the old lady crept to the door of the house and listened and watched with all her powers.

Faiz Ullah spent the day in hiding. At dusk he commenced his journey, and having placed himself on the path by which he meant to approach his home, he waited until day and then walked boldly in. His house, lying to one side of the village, was reached before he met any of the inhabitants, but as he came close to the courtyard entrance he saw his old mother hobbling towards him. In a moment the cold hand of fear, which had borne him company at a distance for many a weary day, seized his heart and he hurried forward to meet her.

"Quick!" she said, panting with the exertion of her haste; "quick! they are awaiting you for evil. Nur Jan has set the men on you. Waste no time, but save your life by flight."

"Is it so, my mother? And it is through Nur Jan, my wife, that I must flee? Say, are the men already in my house, or do they come from without? And Nur Jan, where is she?"

"The men have gone, but they are surely waiting for you. Nur Jan is in the lower room of the tower. I heard little, but she spoke your name to them and they repeated it in bitter anger, even as she had spoken it."

He hastened into the courtyard, and crossing it with quick strides, climbed the ladder to the tower door, and pushed it open. His wife was standing at a loophole looking towards the village, and in her hand was a cloth. Faiz Ullah drew from its scabbard at his side the long knife which every Pathan carries habitually, and crossed the little chamber to where she stood. As the door swung open, letting a flood of light into the dark room, Nur Jan had started back from the loophole, and now stood facing him, knowing herself discovered, like some wild animal at bay, her head thrown back, her body upright, defiant and fearless. With a muttered exclamation of "Accursed one!" he raised the knife and sprang at her, thrusting downwards at her breast with all his force. Nur Jan raised her arm to save herself, and the knife, striking

her forearm, transfixed it, and sank deep into her shoulder beyond. She fell back against the wall, half-collapsed, and as her husband wrenched the knife out and lifted it anew, she raised her eyes and looked full into his. With a groan he loosed his hold on the bloody dagger, and, turning, rushed out of the tower and down the steep ladder, careless of risk, and groping his way like one struck blind. Some instinct, however, guided him with unerring cunning. He dashed into the house, and from their accustomed hiding-place in the thatch he dragged his rifle and cartridge-belt. The gate of the courtyard would be watched and guarded by now, but he avoided it by climbing on to the low roof of the house and letting himself down at the back on to the open hillside. With the precision of one following a well-considered plan, he selected his direction, made for a path leading deep into the hills, and settled down to a flight which he well knew must be long and arduous.

The men, seven in number, split into three parties and set off in pursuit, and the courtyard once more lay silent in the bright sunshine of the clear morning.

V. RETRIBUTION.

It was past noon of the day before the wounding of Nur Jan and the flight of her husband, when Lalla, having found Khair Ali at Raghza, as she had hoped to do, told him the news of Faiz Ullah's treachery, and urged him to follow and warn the raiders of what had happened. He needed no urging. He was himself no raider, but he had many friends among the gang and could do no less than try his best to save them. He did not know where they were to lie up that day, for such secrets are kept as close as possible on the frontier, but he did know the object of their raid and the road they would probably take. His hope was to find them before they had left their hiding-place, and, turning aside but for a moment to take his rifle and some Indian corn bread, which Lalla hastened to bring him, he left the village on his way down the path to the plains. Travelling downhill and at his best pace, he reached the foothills just as the daylight was beginning to fade, and, stopping now and then to give a low but penetrating whistle, which might draw attention to him should he happen to pass near the rendezvous, he pressed on in order to place himself on the track by which the raiders would go forward during the night.

It happened that travelling thus, much faster than they, and having by good fortune hit upon the correct track, he actually caught up the gang after they had started, though he was only in time

partially to save them from disaster.

Faiz Ullah's knowledge of the plans of the gang had been confined, as were Khair Ali's, to a knowledge of the time and of the village they meant to attack. The authorities, acting on this uncertain information, had no opportunity of surrounding them in daylight, and decided to try and intercept them by placing troops across the two paths, by one of which they were almost certain to travel, at such a point that the ambush would probably account for most of them. This policy would have succeeded fully if it had not been that Khair Ali, coming up with the gang just as they were on the point of entering the trap, gave them his warning and stopped their advance. The officer in command of the soldiers, who had just begun to see the dim forms of the tribesmen in the *nala* below where he lay, seeing these suddenly come to a halt, believed that his carefully-hidden ambush must have been discovered, and without further hesitation gave the word to fire.

The stillness of the night was instantly shattered by a heavy outbreak of rifle-fire, in which the sharp rattle of a machine-gun joined. The raiders, who had just understood Khair Ali's message and were on the point of retreating on their own initiative, turned and bolted in the darkness, but not before five of their number had been struck down by the unaimed but concentrated fire. Two more dropped as they ran, but the remainder, with Khair Ali among them, turned a bend of the *nala* and found themselves safe from immediate danger. They hurried on to gain the hills during the night, and would easily have done so had it not been that two of their number had been wounded in the *nala*. The consequence of the delay so occasioned was that the party was still in the lower hills when day broke. The villagers in British territory near the border had been warned to look out for the escaping tribesmen, and it happened that, though the pursuing troops missed the line they had taken, one party of villagers found them and started in pursuit. They were badly armed, and the raiders, sending on the wounded men, formed a rearguard and fought them off without loss, but some of them, and among these Khair Ali, were seen and recognised.

As soon as the gang were in safety, Khair Ali left them and pressed on to Raghza, to find Nur Jan badly hurt and Faiz Ullah fled, with some of the men in pursuit.

"Never shall I rest while he lives!" he cried. "I swore it when I heard that Makhmad had been taken or killed, and that oath is sacred. Where others fail I may well succeed, for I know where he will go, and as he dare not travel evidently fleeing by the main paths, I believe I may get ahead of him and cut him off. He will surely try and join

Hassan Khan in Khost. In Waziristan he may not stay."

All that day and all that night he travelled, with infrequent halts for food and water and without a thought of sleep. The next day he had reached the place where he hoped he might intercept the fugitive if he had rightly gauged his intention. He selected a deep and ominous rent in the hills, the only path by which a man might pass between the rugged masses which towered on either hand. Here above the path he lay down, utterly exhausted. His last effort must be used to keep himself awake. If he succeeded in that, and if Faiz Ullah came that way, he must surely die.

It was fortunate for him that he had not long to wait. He had hardly settled himself down for his vigil when along the path came the figure of a man stumbling, as he himself had been, with fatigue, but pressing on desperately with the fear of death behind him. He had had a terrible time. Driven to avoid all human habitations, which would have delayed his flight, as to pass through without stopping would have caused all the more inquiry, he had had to travel at times by the worst tracks, in a country where the habitual salutation is, "May you not be weary." He had had no food, and nothing but his terror and a dogged determination to escape had kept him moving.

"Faiz Ullah!" came a voice from close at hand. "Oh, Faiz Ullah, halt and see who it is that kills you!"

The man turned with the snarl of a jackal on the closing hound. Khair Ali's head and rifle showed over the edge of the little cliff on which he lay, not ten yards away. The rifle covered him, and his glance showed the grim purpose in the eyes that gleamed behind it. With a sudden movement he sprang aside and fired point-blank at the face which looked into his. The bullet, unaimed, but fired by one who had lived for years with his weapons ever at hand, almost achieved its purpose, for it scored Khair Ali's temple with a streaming gash; but though the shock of the wound threw up his head for a moment, it did not shake his aim. Coolly but instantaneously he brought his sights on to the man below, and shot him through the heart.

He rose, and stanching the blood which ran down his face with the fall of his turban, he made his way down to the nearest village and told his story. He was given food and a bed, while men went out to bury the dead man, who was a Mahommadan, whatever his faults. The next day he started back to Raghza, and when he arrived he told his story there too, and his deed was quickly approved of, without exultation, but as the simple duty that lay upon the community. The incident had come to a satisfactory conclusion. Much harm had been occasioned, but the

traitor was dead, and his death was a good example to other traitors: there was no more to be said.

The trial of Makhmad occasioned no small interest in Daudabad and the district round it, as was testified by the crowd that had collected at the *Kacheri* on the opening day, on any pretext or on none, to talk the matter over and await the outcome. Through this crowd there came, while the day was still young, the tall figure of Khair Ali, quickly to be noted among the folk around by his great stature and his carriage. He came into the *compound* looking for some one in authority, and almost immediately he was met by the Political Tehsildar, the same who had been present at the fateful interview with Faiz Ullah many weeks before, and who had been apprised of Khair Ali's arrival by some underling of the department, who had recognised him the moment he appeared.

"Hah! Khair Ali," he said, as he reached him. "What are you doing here?"

"I want to speak with the Sahib. I have a word for him about Makhmad's case."

"Aye, but in the meantime you are wanted for being in last month's raid. It is for the Sahib to give the word, but the order is out for your arrest, and the proof is clear."

"Very well," replied the young Pathan. "I know I shall be arrested for the raid, but I can bring witnesses to show that I had little enough to do with it, and no evil intent. I came because I can say a word for Makhmad; and as for the raid, I would have given myself up long ago and stood my trial, but that I wanted to be free to come here to-day. Therefore, I say, take me to the Sahib."

The Tehsildar was glad enough to comply, for Khair Ali was one of whom little wrong was known. Calling a police sergeant to act as guard, he led the way to the Deputy-Commissioner's office, and after stating his errand, ushered Khair Ali into his presence. He quickly proffered his request, and was as quickly granted it. He must be confined until he was wanted in the court, and his own case would be decided on after his evidence had been given. To that end, the Deputy-Commissioner made him tell the story of the raid, which he did truthfully and circumstantially, and he was then dismissed, to be called into the court when wanted.

It was the second day of the trial. The case for the prosecution had been closed, and the charge of participation in the raid had been fully proved. Makhmad was a British subject, one of the many with property on both sides of the frontier, and he had been found in arms against the law. There was no defence. Thus the case stood when his cousin was called into the court.

As he came in, his eyes quickly ranged the room and fell on Makhmad. He looked pale and ill from his severe

Hassan Khan in Khost. In Waziristan he may not stay."

All that day and all that night he travelled, with infrequent halts for food and water and without a thought of sleep. The next day he had reached the place where he hoped he might intercept the fugitive if he had rightly gauged his intention. He selected a deep and ominous rent in the hills, the only path by which a man might pass between the rugged masses which towered on either hand. Here above the path he lay down, utterly exhausted. His last effort must be used to keep himself awake. If he succeeded in that, and if Faiz Ullah came that way, he must surely die.

It was fortunate for him that he had not long to wait. He had hardly settled himself down for his vigil when along the path came the figure of a man stumbling, as he himself had been, with fatigue, but pressing on desperately with the fear of death behind him. He had had a terrible time. Driven to avoid all human habitations, which would have delayed his flight, as to pass through without stopping would have caused all the more inquiry, he had had to travel at times by the worst tracks, in a country where the habitual salutation is, "May you not be weary." He had had no food, and nothing but his terror and a dogged determination to escape had kept him moving.

"Faiz Ullah!" came a voice from close at hand. "Oh, Faiz Ullah, halt and see who it is that kills you!"

The man turned with the snarl of a jackal on the closing hound. Khair Ali's head and rifle showed over the edge of the little cliff on which he lay, not ten yards away. The rifle covered him, and his glance showed the grim purpose in the eyes that gleamed behind it. With a sudden movement he sprang aside and fired point-blank at the face which looked into his. The bullet, unaimed, but fired by one who had lived for years with his weapons ever at hand, almost achieved its purpose, for it scored Khair Ali's temple with a streaming gash; but though the shock of the wound threw up his head for a moment, it did not shake his aim. Coolly but instantaneously he brought his sights on to the man below, and shot him through the heart.

He rose, and stanching the blood which ran down his face with the fall of his turban, he made his way down to the nearest village and told his story. He was given food and a bed, while men went out to bury the dead man, who was a Mahommadan, whatever his faults. The next day he started back to Raghza, and when he arrived he told his story there too, and his deed was quickly approved of, without exultation, but as the simple duty that lay upon the community. The incident had come to a satisfactory conclusion. Much harm had been occasioned, but the

traitor was dead, and his death was a good example to other traitors: there was no more to be said.

The trial of Makhmad occasioned no small interest in Daudabad and the district round it, as was testified by the crowd that had collected at the *Kacheri* on the opening day, on any pretext or on none, to talk the matter over and await the outcome. Through this crowd there came, while the day was still young, the tall figure of Khair Ali, quickly to be noted among the folk around by his great stature and his carriage. He came into the *compound* looking for some one in authority, and almost immediately he was met by the Political Tehsildar, the same who had been present at the fateful interview with Faiz Ullah many weeks before, and who had been apprised of Khair Ali's arrival by some underling of the department, who had recognised him the moment he appeared.

"Hah! Khair Ali," he said, as he reached him. "What are you doing here?"

"I want to speak with the Sahib. I have a word for him about Makhmad's case."

"Aye, but in the meantime you are wanted for being in last month's raid. It is for the Sahib to give the word, but the order is out for your arrest, and the proof is clear."

"Very well," replied the young Pathan. "I know I shall be arrested for the raid, but I can bring witnesses to show that I had little enough to do with it, and no evil intent. I came because I can say a word for Makhmad; and as for the raid, I would have given myself up long ago and stood my trial, but that I wanted to be free to come here to-day. Therefore, I say, take me to the Sahib."

The Tehsildar was glad enough to comply, for Khair Ali was one of whom little wrong was known. Calling a police sergeant to act as guard, he led the way to the Deputy-Commissioner's office, and after stating his errand, ushered Khair Ali into his presence. He quickly proffered his request, and was as quickly granted it. He must be confined until he was wanted in the court, and his own case would be decided on after his evidence had been given. To that end, the Deputy-Commissioner made him tell the story of the raid, which he did truthfully and circumstantially, and he was then dismissed, to be called into the court when wanted.

It was the second day of the trial. The case for the prosecution had been closed, and the charge of participation in the raid had been fully proved. Makhmad was a British subject, one of the many with property on both sides of the frontier, and he had been found in arms against the law. There was no defence. Thus the case stood when his cousin was called into the court.

As he came in, his eyes quickly ranged the room and fell on Makhmad. He looked pale and ill from his severe

wound, from which he had hardly as yet fully recovered. Khair Ali passed close to him as he was led to the witness-box, and paused to reply to his exclamation of astonishment.

"Salam Aliekum! Salam Makhmad! Are you well, are you happy, are you joyful?" going through the protracted form of salutation. "I have come to say a word for you, my brother. May Allah prosper my way."

The police escort roughly checked his speech and took him on to his stand, where he told his story to the listening Sessions Judge who was trying the case.

"Sahib," he said, "you may not remember, but many in court to-day do, how that in the expedition in 19— a convoy was attacked and partly looted in the Spin Tangi. The tribesmen got away with some loot, and they captured as well a British sergeant, who had fought hard for the stores in his charge. Now, Sahib, when those who had captured him got him back to their village, they were about to hand him over to the women to deal with. I need not tell you what that means. I was a boy at the time, and I was out with my cousin, Makhmad here, who had taken me to see the fighting from a distance as being good training for my youth. It happened that when the Englishman was brought into Killa Kalan, we were there for the night; and, Sahib—this I swear by the prophet, that Makhmad, and he alone, saved the soldier's life, and nearly lost his own in the doing of it. He told the Wazirs they were fools to kill the man, who would be worth much to them when the expedition was over, and he won the old men to his side; but the women had their say, for they love the cruel sport that falls to them with the wounded and captured, and the young men clamoured for the white man's life, egged on by them. Who, they asked, was Makhmad to interfere with their councils? He answered that he was one who had led many a successful raid against the neighbouring tribes, and had helped them to beat off more than one such raid from without. He saved the white soldier's life, and in the end he was handed back, and the men of Killa Kalan got a reward for having spared him.

"Sahib, that is my story, and the tale is true. Makhmad has raided, but he has never killed, except in self-defence. He is a true man, save for this one fault, and if he should swear to raid no more, his oath may indeed be trusted."

Such was the defence, and none other could have succeeded as well. The Judge gave the prisoner the heavy sentence his crime necessitated, but recommended him to mercy, and his case was brought up before that authority which could pardon or remit. Inquiry established the truth of Khair Ali's story, and it was felt that to make much of the sergeant's rescue

would be good policy, and in the end Makhmad found himself let off with the comparatively nominal sentence of six months' imprisonment.

As for Khair Ali's case, it was decided that it should be assessed by the tribal *Jirgah*, an old-established Frontier tribunal, to which many cases along the border can profitably be referred. It consists of the elders of a given section of the community, who have ways of finding out the truth of such cases which are not available to a more regularly constituted court. Their view of the case was purely tribal: Khair Ali had but set out to save his friends against a traitor, a creature hated and loathed as far as the border stretches. He was no raider at any time, as was well known. He had run a risk for no profit to himself. That he had fired on British subjects during the escape counted as nothing to the *Jirgah*, for had they not been firing at him? And Khair Ali left the court without a stain on his character.

Now it happened that the Deputy-Commissioner, a man who had learnt in the years he had spent among the Frontier Pathans how to size them up with quick discrimination, had taken a great fancy to Khair Ali. He had heard his defence of Makhmad, and was struck and surprised at the straightforward way in which the tale was told. He had found a Pathan who had performed two altruistic deeds at no small risk to himself, and who had descended to no subterfuge to shield himself. The man's personality, too, was distinctly taking, and after some thought, and in consultation with his adviser, the Political Tehsildar, he caused a message to reach Khair Ali after his release that he would like to see him. Such a message from such a source brought the recipient in to Daudabad post-haste, and the frankly-conveyed offer of employment as a Subordinate in the Political Department—the best prize open to the better class of educated Pathan—was accepted with the gratitude only shown by the finer characters amongst Indians, of whatever race, on obtaining a benefit.

THE GREEN MAN.

BY ALFRED NOYES.

In those old days at Brighthelmstone,
When art was half Chinese,
And Venus, dipped by Martha Gunn,
Came rosy from the seas;
When every dandy walked the Steyne
In something strange and new,
The Green Man,
The Green Man,
Made quite a how-dy-doo.

Green pantaloons, green waistcoat,
Green frock and green cravat,
Green gloves and green silk handkerchief,
Green shoes and tall green hat,—
He took the air in a green gig,
From eight o'clock till ten;
O, the Green Man,
The Green Man,
Was quite successful then.

And though, beneath that golden dome,
That Chinese pup of Paul's,
With snow and azure, rose and foam,
He danced at routs and balls,—
Though all the laughing flowers on earth
Around the room he'd swing,
The Green Man,
The Green Man,
Remained a leaf of Spring.

His rooms, they said, his chairs, his bed,
Were green as meadows are.
He dined on hearts of lettuces,
He wore an emerald star.
O, many a fop in blue and gold
His little hour might shine,
Till the Green Man,
The Green Man,
Came strutting up the Steyne.

His name, I think, was William White,
He wished to keep it green.
His fond ambition reached its height
When Brighton's frolic queen
FitzHerbert stopped her crimson chair,
And dropped her flirting fan,
With "Tee, hee, hee!
O, look! O, see!
Here comes that odd Green Man!"

Alack, he reached it all too well.
Despite his will to fame,
Thenceforth he shone for beau and belle
By that ambiguous name;
So William White was quite forgot
By matron, fop, and maid;
Ay, White became
The Green Man—
Became an April shade.

Now, even his green and ghostly gig,
The green whip in his hand,
The green lights in his powdered wig,
Are vanished from the land.
Green livery, darkling emerald star, . . .
Not even their wraiths are seen.
And nobody knows
The Green Man,
Although his grave is green.

A COMPANY OF TANKS.

BY MAJOR W. H. L. WATSON, D.S.O., D.C.M.,

Author of 'Adventures of a Despatch Rider.'

CHAPTER XVI.—THE HINDENBURG LINE.

(August 27th to October 8th, 1918.)

We had become masters of our tanks. Faults had been traced and eliminated; defective parts had been replaced—three tanks had received complete new engines—and invaluable experience had been acquired not only in the upkeep and repair of tanks, but in the art of extorting "spares" from Field Stores, in preserving the necessary "stock" in the Technical Quartermaster-Sergeant's stores, and in arranging for the correct "part," even if it were an engine complete, to be rushed forward by lorry to the invalid tank. I knew now that, if I ordered a tank or a section of tanks to trek any reasonable distance within a reasonable time, there was no need for me to wonder how many of my tanks would reach their destination. This may seem a small thing, but you must remember that five months before not half a dozen of my men had had the slightest idea of a petrol-engine's insides.

I took the opportunity of indulging in a little Paris leave. On the second night Paris was bombed. I was awakened by a discreet tap at the door of my room. Sleepily I heard the calm voice of the unruffled Swede who owned my favourite hotel in Montparnasse—

"It is an air-raid, and my clients gather below; but M. le Commandant, who is accustomed to war's alarms, will doubtless prefer to continue his sleep."

It was too absurd to be bombed when stretched comfortably in the softest of beds with a private bathroom next door. . . . I thought that I must be dreaming. Anyway, nothing on earth or above it could have induced me to leave that bed.

My car met me at Amiens on the 25th. The driver told me that my Company had moved forward to Mananoourt, a village a few miles south of Ytres, and was expecting shortly to take part in an attack. So with the famous air from that sophisticated operetta, "La Petite Femme de Loth," running in my head, I drove through Villers-Bretonneux and Warfusée to Proyart, where I dropped an austere American Staff Officer, who had come with me in the train, and thence over the Somme through the outskirts of Peronne, to a tidy little camp on clean grass by a

small coppice half-way between Manancourt and Nurlu. I found the Company making ready for action.

At Boisleux we had come under the orders of the 4th Tank Brigade, which had suffered such heavy losses during the battle of Amiens, both in a series of actions with the Canadians and later in the Happy Valley, that it had been placed in reserve. The stern defence of Bullecourt by the enemy, who held it as desperately in 1918 as they had in 1917, nearly drew the Brigade from its rest; but at last even Bullecourt fell, and the British Armies swept on to the suburbs of Cambrai and the Hindenburg Line.

It was with the Hindenburg Line that the 4th Tank Brigade was concerned.

On the front of the 4th Army, with which our Brigade was operating, the Hindenburg Line, a series of defences 7000 to 10,000 yards in depth, was itself defended by the St Quentin Canal. For three and a half miles, between Vendhuille and Bellicourt, the canal passes through a tunnel, and this stretch it was determined to attack. But before the main operation could take place, it was urgently necessary to capture certain outlying points of vantage known as The Knoll and Quennemont and Guillemont Farms. Already we had attempted unsuccessfully on three occasions to carry them by storm. A final attempt was to be made by the 108th American Infantry Regiment on September 27th, and one section of Carrier tanks was ordered to assist. Ryan, who had been in command of the Company during my absence, had detailed his own section for the job.

On the afternoon of the 25th, Ryan and I reported at the Headquarters of the American Division concerned, the 27th. We found to our gratification that Australian Staff Officers were "nursing" the Americans —there were a number of Australians with each American unit—and we soon obtained the orders and the information which we required. The Australians knew us and we knew the Australians: nothing could have been more satisfactory. The Americans, on the other hand, had never heard of Carrier tanks, although they appreciated their use at once.

My tanks moved by easy stages to a copse three-quarters of a mile from Villers-Faucon, where they were loaded on the 26th with ammunition, wire, water, and sandbags. They were joined by unloading parties of American infantry, eight men to each tank, bright young fellows who had not previously been in action. I doubted whether they would be of use: to follow a slow Carrier tank into action and to unload it in sight of the enemy under heavy fire needs the coolness and skill of veterans.

On the night before the battle the tanks moved up to points in the rear of our posts, and thirty minutes after "zero" they followed the fighting

tanks and the infantry. The shelling was severe.

The first tank under Sergeant Broughton reached its objective, but as the unloading party had lost touch with it on the trek forward, the crew were compelled themselves to unload the tank. Apparently the attack had been checked, for Sergeant Broughton found that he was so close to the enemy that he could see them firing. He completed the dump, swinging the tank to give the men as much cover as possible from machine-gun bullets, though without help it was painfully slow work, and half his men were wounded. On the way back the tank struck a land-mine, and was set on fire.

The second tank, under Thomas,[1] became "ditched." It was so heavily loaded that the unditching beam could not be used, and such intense machine-gun fire was directed at the tank that Thomas quite properly did not ask his men to attempt to unload the roof. It would, in any case, have been a laborious job, since the unloading party had missed the way. Three attempts were made to extricate the tank from the crater into which it had slipped, but each attempt failed. The German gunners were more successful, for by dusk they had blown the tank into a fantastic tangle of twisted wreckage.

The third tank struck a land-mine on the way forward. Two of the crew were killed instantly, and a third man was severely wounded. Ryan, who was walking beside the tank, was badly injured—his ankle was shattered by the force of the explosion.

Read and I had tramped up to Ronssoy, a large industrial village in which were the headquarters of the 108th Regiment. It was a damp steamy day. The Americans were puzzled and disconsolate. Their infantry, led gallantly by tanks of the 4th Battalion, had undoubtedly advanced, but the reports were so conflicting that no one could say definitely how the Line ran. It appeared that the Americans had not "mopped up" with any success, since there were parties of the enemy between the Americans who had attacked and the posts which they had left at "zero." In places the Germans seemed to be farther forward than they had been before the attack commenced. Of the fighting tanks the majority had received direct hits,[2] and the crews, mostly wounded, were staggering back by twos and threes into Ronssoy. It was no wonder that Sergeant Broughton had found himself under the very noses of the enemy. With the main attack still to come, the situation could not have been more unsatisfactory.

Even the headquarters of the 108th Regiment were to suffer. We had noticed a little nervously that although a Ger-

[1] Lieutenant (later Captain) S. A. Thomas, M.C.

[2] It was in these local attacks that tanks suffered most severely.

man observation balloon was looking into Ronssoy, a crowd of orderlies and officers were collected in the road outside the headquarters. The lesson was sharp. Twenty minutes after we had left the village in an ammunition lorry a salvo of 5·9's, entirely without warning, burst among the crowd.

Of the land-mines which had proved fatal to two of my tanks and to several tanks of the 4th Battalion we had received information, but the information was found to be inaccurate. Warning had reached us of a British anti-tank minefield laid in March, and we had marked the mines on our maps. The minefield, however, was in fact five hundred yards from its supposed position, and its full extent was not discovered until on the 29th ten American tanks endeavoured to pass across it and were destroyed.

On the 28th it was clear enough that, although parties of American infantry were out in front of their original line, The Knoll, together with Quennemont and Guillemont Farms, remained in German hands. The attack of the 108th Regiment was more than unsuccessful. If it had never been launched the attack on the 29th might have taken place, at least under cover of a barrage; but now that scattered bodies of Americans, surrounded by the enemy, were ahead, no barrage could be employed.

While the survivors of Ryan's section, under the command of Thomas, were salving what remained of their tanks' equipment, the three remaining sections moved forward from Manancourt with the battalions to which they had been allotted. Fortunately, my officers reconnoitred their own routes, for two of the convoys with which they were trekking temporarily lost their way. My tanks were detailed once again to carry supplies for the fighting tanks, a dull and thankless task.

Two hours after "zero," on the 29th, my car felt its way through thick mist into Hargicourt, a dilapidated village a mile or so from the "infantry start line." The Brigade had ordered that the Refilling Point for tanks should be an open stretch of rough pasture on the farther side of the village. The map reference of the point was L5b4.1. It was intended that on the afternoon of the battle lorries should bring supplies to the Refilling Point, that the loads should there be transferred to my tanks, and that my tanks with a day's supplies on board should follow the fighting tanks across the broken, desolate country of the Hindenburg system of trenches. I had decided in consequence to make L5b4.1 my headquarters.

The enemy did not approve of this decision. As soon as the mist began to clear Hargicourt itself was shelled methodically, while the proposed Refilling Point, which was surrounded by a number of half-concealed batteries, was the object of a bitter hate. A wireless tank, destined for the same unhappy spot, had re-

tired into the garden of a cottage, and I accompanied the wireless tank. It belonged to my old battalion. We heard all the news, and the driver knew how to make tea.

Soon it became clear that for once the battle was not proceeding in accordance with plan. Obviously the enemy was still clinging to the Quennemont Ridge, and the left flank of the attacking infantry was uncovered. The direction from which the bulk of the shelling came could not be mistaken. Hargicourt itself was being shelled with light stuff, while, if we had reached our objectives to time, the village would by now have been out of range.

The news was melancholy. The wounded, streaming back through the village, told us that the enemy machine-guns were murderous; reports from tank officers showed that an appalling number of tanks had received "direct hits": of the Americans nothing had been heard. From our right, however, came the astounding rumour that the 42nd Division had achieved the impossible by forcing the passage of the canal and capturing Bellenglise.

I instructed my sections to concentrate at certain points in the rear of the village, and pushed forward along the Quennemont road. In a few minutes I met Major Hotblack, the intelligence officer at Tank Corps Headquarters. He had been wounded in the head. Later I learned that he with two tanks had just captured Quennemont Ridge, which for so long had defied us. And the tank crews had held the ridge until they were relieved.

I obtained as much information as I could from the many walking wounded—our attack on the left had been checked—and returning to my headquarters, which were rapidly becoming distasteful, despatched a report by wireless.

There was an element of humour in this delay to our advance. It was so unexpected that many headquarters found themselves farther forward than they had intended. Puzzled mess-sergeants, pushing on blindly to villages which were still in the enemy's hands, were puzzled and indignant when they were warned to return. The neighbourhood of Hargicourt was crowded with pathetic little camps and disconsolate staff-captains. Personally I had no wish to remain even in Hargicourt. The enemy had begun to use gas shells, and one heavy howitzer at least made Hargicourt its target for a time. The Refilling Point could not come into operation; the surviving tanks would find plentiful supplies at the dumps which my sections had already made. On the other hand, two miles back, there were some excellent quarries at Templeux-le-Guérard, where we could rest in safety and comfort until we were wanted. You will remember that, as we were not "fighting troops," but merely a humble collection of "supply tanks," we could retire from

the fray without hurt to our self-respect.

I was fortunate enough to meet the General's car between Templeux and Roisel. He approved of my suggestion. I returned rapidly to Hargicourt, and withdrew my miserable headquarters to a grassy depression near the quarries, where Harland's section had rallied. Mac went in search of suitable dug-outs, while I listened to Harland's report.

Harland, like a good section commander, had given his men an excellent breakfast before the day's work—fried bacon, hot toast, and tea, followed by rum.[1] Each tank had been loaded at Manancourt Copse with 240 gallons of petrol, 40 gallons of oil, 80 gallons of water, 40 lb. of grease, 20,000 rounds of Hotchkiss ammunition, and 400 rounds of 6-pdr. ammunition. Thus heavily laden, they crawled on for three hours, until they reached the appointed spot for unloading, immediately behind our original line. They were noticed by an enemy aeroplane flying low, and shelled heavily in consequence. Small dumps were formed in shell-holes—the operation was completed with astonishing celerity—and the tanks, running light, raced away. One man had been gassed and one wounded.

Within the next two hours the German gunners destroyed half the supplies which had been dumped, but they were not required, since the majority of the American tanks, for whose benefit the dumps had been formed, lay derelict on the minefield, which had blown up two of my tanks on the 27th.

Ritchie's section had experienced no adventures. They had dumped their supplies punctually, and rallied without hindrance from the enemy.

We retired at dusk to our dug-outs in the quarries above the village of Templeux-le-Guérard. These quarries penetrated confusedly into a steep and isolated hill, upon which a stout castle might well have been built. The workings were approached by slippery paths. The hill was a very maze of tunnels, ravines, pits, shelters, which provided impenetrable cover for numerous guns and a brigade or more of infantry. The enemy appreciated its qualities, and refused to waste shells upon it. Their gunners confined themselves to the lower slopes and to the level-crossing in Templeux itself.

The quarries were tenanted with wrathful Australians. It had been planned that the Americans should storm the first trench-system of the Hindenburg Line, and that the Australians, passing through the Americans, should continue the attack by storming the second trench-system.

---

[1] We could always obtain rum: every tank carried a supply to revive its exhausted crew. At Cambrai each of my tanks carried a bottle of whisky in place of rum, but this innovation tended to bunch the infantry—Argylls—dangerously near to the tanks, and in subsequent actions we reverted to rum.

But when the Australians went forward an hour or so after "zero," they discovered to their cost that in many places the enemy infantry was sitting happily in the trenches which the Americans had captured. Large numbers of Americans had disappeared. Not even our aeroplanes could tell us what points they had reached, or how many had survived. The result was that the Australians, with an unknown quantity of Americans "out in front," did not dare to use their artillery. They resigned themselves to the inevitable, and attacked the Hindenburg Line grimly with bomb and bayonet. They hammered in little wedges of men, and foot by foot, with savage cunning and merciless determination, fought their way through the gigantic system of intricate defences, often coming suddenly upon detached bodies of Americans, helplessly surrounded, but still holding out.

It was indeed true that on our right the 46th Division, "equipped with lifebelts, and carrying mats and rafts," by a gallant feat of arms had crossed the St Quentin Canal and established themselves on the eastern bank,—the right flank of the Australians was thus secured; but to my mind even the feat of the 46th Division did not surpass the astonishing exploits of the Australians, who took disaster by the throat and choked victory out of it. For various reasons this phase of the battle has been somewhat obscured. . . . By October 5th the Australians had broken through the Hindenburg Line, and with the help of tanks stormed Montbrehain. They had fought continuously since September 29th.

In these intermediate actions we took no part. After two nights in the quarries I moved my Company to Haute Wood, a stunted copse sheltering a quiet grassy slope, a couple of miles out of Templeux, on the Roisel road. There we remained placidly until October 7th in the multitudinous tents which we had by this time collected, overhauling our tanks, playing a little football, and visiting as frequently as our duties permitted the strictly rationed canteen at Peronne. We were disturbed only by an occasional shell from a long-range gun.

Once Montbrehain was stormed the enemy could cling only to the farther fringes of the Hindenburg Line, and on October 8th we drove them out of organised trenches altogether into the clean open country. My tanks were again employed to follow the fighting tanks with supplies, but on this occasion my sections were not allocated to battalions, but remained under my own command, so that we were able to choose our own times and places, and by "pooling" supplies to effect very necessary economies.

On the 5th I had reconnoitred with Mac and my section commander a route forward from Haute Wood to the

vicinity of Bellicourt. It was a dismal tramp over ground shelled to utter destruction—a maze of crumbling trenches and forgotten posts, strewn with derelict equipment, deserted dumps of ammunition, dead stinking horses, and too often the corpses of unburied Germans. Here and there ran light railways, which we did not desire to damage in case they should be needed; and near Bellicourt was a wilderness of sidings and stores and huts and roadways.

From the high ground above Bellicourt we looked across the log-road to Quennemont Ridge—outwardly a peaceful dark-green down, but in fact a loathsome graveyard on which the corpses lay scattered in handfuls, and blackened metal tombs that had been tanks. The distant gunners were still tormenting this hill, which was already dead, and shells, lazily exploding, stirred again the mash of loose mud, rotting bodies, and rusted rifles.

The log-road over the trenches, narrow and insecure, was crammed with thick traffic moving at less than walking pace, for it was the only road from Hargicourt to Bellicourt. It might have been a bridge over a river impassable to all transport except tanks.

To the south were low dark ridges stretching to St Quentin. They were fringed with bursting shells. And in front of us was Bellicourt, tattered, but with red-brick cheerful in a gleam of sun—not utterly submerged by war, and with but a faint spirit of the place hovering above the levelled ruins, as were those ravished places which had known war for year after year. Bellicourt, shattered but undismayed, still lived to point gallantly to the tracks of the retiring enemy and the goal for which we had always fought—open country.

On the 6th my tanks moved into the trenches, and on the night of the 7th trekked down a valley, less destroyed than others, to Bellicourt, and over the tunnelled canal and the main St Quentin road. They pitched their tents by some trenches. I had advanced my headquarters meanwhile to a clean stretch of turf by the St Quentin road, just outside Bellicourt, leaving at Haute Wood my stores and heavy baggage, which I had been able only within the last few days to bring forward from the copse at Manancourt. Lorries were none too plentiful, and I had collected a great quantity of stores in case I should find myself out of touch with the sources of supply.

The night was noisy, but no damage was done, and the morning was splendidly fine. My sections had moved soon after dawn. I followed later in my car.

We drove along the canal to Bellenglise, then, bearing to the left, took to the old Roman Road, along which the 5th and 3rd Divisions, defeated, broken, and more weary than I could describe, poured confusedly through the rain on the night of August 26th,

1914. We passed by the strange cottage, still unharmed, where we despatch-riders had given stew and hot coffee to the bedraggled Staff and had slept amongst the straw, and came to Harland's tanks a mile or so short of Estrées, waiting dully to supply the tanks of the 301st American Battalion. So we arrived at the dismal dilapidated village itself, momentarily empty except for innumerable notices in German and a derelict whippet standing in the little square in which our Signal Company had rallied four years since. We slipped into a byroad, left the car, and walked across country to a half-grown copse under the shadow of Beaurevoir. There we found Ritchie's four tanks with that excellent Mac of the 1st Battalion, who had helped us to detrain at Achiet-le-Grand. While we were consuming tea and sandwiches with them, it was reported that certain tanks had run short of petrol near Serain, the first of the redeemed villages. I sent two of Ritchie's tanks forward to help. We returned in gentlemanly fashion for lunch after visits to various headquarters. . . . Ritchie's tanks duly arrived at Serain, where they were overwhelmed by the embraces of the pale hysterical villagers. Both Ritchie's and Harland's tanks trekked back that afternoon to Bellicourt. Two of Harland's tanks passed through a valley crammed with a brigade of cavalry, who at the eleventh hour of the war were hoping for an old-fashioned, sabre-waving pursuit. It was a little ludicrous to think that my old supply-tanks could have put to flight the brigade in the valley. As it was, they merely gave the horses a severe fright.

That night we began to realise the unbelievable—there was not a trench between us and Germany. And yet this thing, for which we had been yearning four long years, had come about in the ordinary course of the day's work. That gay, splendid break-through of our imaginations was in fact but the successful completion of a day's fighting disappointingly like any other day's fighting. We could just repeat the words again and again, doubting their truth, yet rejoicing soberly in their significance—

"We are through to the open country!"

CHAPTER XVII.—THE SECOND BATTLE OF LE CATEAU.

(October 9th to October 30th, 1918.)

On October 9th the enemy broke off the engagement, retiring six miles to the neighbourhood of Le Cateau, in order that they might re-form and again present some sort of front to our advance. Clouds of fast tanks should have pursued them closely and prevented them ever

from rallying. In the absence of tanks the cavalry pressed forward on either side of the Roman Road, gallantly charged machine-guns, and returned more than a little shaken with news which the aeroplanes had already reported. We wondered what would have happened if the enemy rearguards had possessed a few "whippets" in addition to stoutly-fought machine-guns. It is a desperate business—to charge machine-guns, and it is pure suicide for cavalry to await the attack of tanks.

My old Carrier tanks were not to be left behind. On the 11th I moved my headquarters to a deserted inn on the Roman Road in the neighbourhood of Beaurevoir. The sections were encamped close by. This inn, which, together with a few houses and a beetroot-factory, was known as Genève, had its advantages. The rooms were large and convenient; within a few yards was a German R.E. dump: it was conveniently on the main road and the direct tank route forward. It had, however, been the centre of a stiff little fight. Within a radius of a hundred yards were thirty to forty corpses, mostly Americans. We commenced reverently to bury them, but one morning a somewhat severe American padre came in and bade us exhume his compatriots, and carry them to a little cemetery half a mile away, of which we had known nothing. We were only too glad to help him, and I lent him some men and a limbered waggon.

The mile along the old enemy defences to the village of Beaurevoir was a dolorous walk. The defences were only holes scratched on the reverse side of banks by entrenching tools, and shallow machine-gun posts. The dead had not all been buried, and sometimes the searcher would discover a man who must have been long in dying—open warfare is not pleasant for those who fall wounded in hidden places.

Beaurevoir itself, set on a hill, was not yet empty of the dead. The ruined cottages had been evacuated hurriedly, but in each cottage the hand-loom had been smashed, and *not by shells*. The statue of Jeanne d'Arc had been taken from its pedestal, and had not been found.

The only live civilian near Beaurevoir was a cow, which kept Thomas's section supplied with milk until the Chinese came to clear the battle-field.

The first stand of the enemy was made on the line of the Selle river: Le Cateau was doubtful territory. It was determined to attack on the 17th. A composite section of six tanks under Parslow moved forward to Maurois Station, a trek of ten miles, in case he should be required to assist.

I motored up to see him, and every yard of the road was for me a solemn triumph. We were avenging the confused retreat of the British Army on the afternoon and night of the first battle of Le Cateau; we

were driving through clean, unshelled country, which might never have been touched by the finger of war if it had not been for the craters blown at the cross-roads and the occasional corpse by the roadside; and never in my life have I seen happier people, men and women more flustered and confused with happiness, than the thin underfed villagers who stood gazing in the crowded main street of Maretz.

Short of Maurois village the Germans had blown into the cutting the road-bridge over the railway from Cambrai to St Quentin. The traffic was being diverted when we arrived on the scene, over heavy fields, to a level crossing, and the engineers were working against time to construct a new bridge capable of bearing the heaviest transport. It had been raining, and the men were finding it difficult indeed to haul the great girders into position. A couple of hundred yards away were Parslow's tanks. The remedy was obvious. A tank was brought round on to the rails and spent a profitable hour in doing a job which would have taken fifty men a full day. The bridge was completed rapidly, and the traffic once more flowed steadily over the bridge instead of floundering over the fields.

On the 18th Parslow's tanks were not required. On the 19th they trekked back to Genève. The 4th Tank Brigade was being relieved by the 2nd Tank Brigade. We expected orders to move to Hargicourt for entrainment, and we made an expedition over the log-road to discover the whereabouts of the ramp. But a railway accident outside Cambrai delayed the arrival of the 2nd Carrier Company, — we were ordered to remain temporarily with the 2nd Tank Brigade.

We became involved at once in our last battle of the war. From the 17th to the 20th we had straightened our line in a series of fierce and costly little attacks. The enemy had been driven definitely from Le Cateau and now lay just beyond the outskirts of the town. To the west of the town we had crossed the Selle. The Army Commander decided to throw the enemy back to the Mormal Forest by a grand attack on a fifteen-mile front. I received orders from the 2nd Tank Brigade to assist the XIIIth Corps by carrying supplies.

I instructed Parslow's section, which had just completed a ten-mile trek, to return with Thomas's section to the camp by Maurois Station, and when they were on their way I reported at Corps Headquarters. I arranged with the Corps Staff that Thomas's section should operate with the 33rd, 34th, and 35th Infantry Brigades of the 11th Division, while Parslow should help the 25th Division. The Corps further requested urgently that any spare tanks which I might have should be detailed to carry ammunition for the 104th Army Brigade R.F.A., the guns of which could not be reached by horse transport without difficulty on account

of the nature of the ground. I brought up Harland from Genève, gave him two tanks, and ordered him to carry on.

On the afternoon of the 20th I established my advanced headquarters in an orchard, quarter of a mile from the bridge which we had helped to construct. After mess we all attended a first-rate show given by the Divisional Troupe of the 25th Division, and returned to our camp greatly encouraged, but a trifle unhappy that we had not billeted ourselves in one of the many excellent houses in Maurois.

That night one officer at least was disturbed in his slumbers. The enemy shelled Maurois persistently, sending over a few shells to the neighbourhood of the bridge. Finally a large aeroplane bombed along the main road, dropping one group just short of the camp, and another group, intended presumably for the bridge, between the bridge and the camp. The aeroplane was flying so recklessly low—it was a clear night with a moon—that for once our machine-gunners brought her down in a field about a mile beyond the bridge.

Much damage had been done in Maurois. We were thankful that we were in tents outside the village. One shell had exploded just behind the hall in which the concert had been held. For such shelling and bombing the casualties were heavy.

On the 21st I was quite busy. After a visit to my rear headquarters at Genève to arrange for the supply of spare parts by lorry, I reported again to the Corps for final orders. Then with Parslow I visited the 25th Division and went with the Divisional Commander to see the Commander of the Brigade to which Parslow's tanks would be attached.

In the afternoon I ran over with Thomas to Reumont, where we hoped to find the 11th Division, but a relief had not yet been completed and its staff had not arrived. We spent our spare time in walking out to the cottage, which had been the headquarters of the 5th Division on August 26, 1914, but time had swept away every trace of that first battle. The pits which had been dug on either side of the road to shelter the signallers had been filled in. The tiles of the cottage, loosened by the scaling-ladders of our intelligence officer, had been replaced. The little trenches had disappeared. But there was the hedge from the cover of which our one heavy battery, the 108th, had fired—it ran short of fuses in the old-fashioned way, and Grimers was sent hastily down the road on his motor-cycle for more. In that barn to the left we had slept hoggishly among the straw on the night before the battle, the first night's sleep since we had detrained at Landrecies and the last until we reached the Aisne. To my amazement the church behind the barn was still standing, intact except for a couple of shell-holes. I could have sworn that four years ago, as I was riding out of the

village, I saw flames bursting from the roof. The Germans certainly entered the village not long after I had left it. Perhaps they may have extinguished the flames and repaired the damage.

I had no time to question the good people of Reumont or to discover whether those exiguous, badly-sited trenches on the Le Cateau road were still to be distinguished. The 11th Division had taken over, and the G.S.O.(i.) of the relieved Division was describing his experiences among the outposts to his successor. I reported, and was referred to the "Q" branch of the Division, located doubtfully in Maurois.

We searched Maurois without success. We were somewhat delayed by a stream of ambulances bearing through the rain and the darkness the gassed civilians of Le Cateau. These civilians—men, women, and children—had refused to leave their homes. Even the French mission could not move them. They protested airily that in a day or two Le Cateau would be safe. Now through Le Cateau passed the stores and ammunition of a corps: the cellars contained infantry; the houses sheltered guns. The enemy accordingly shelled it heartily with gas and H.E., and the gas was fatal to the civilians. We sent forward as many gas-helmets as we could, but even if they had been sufficient it would have been beyond man's wit to distribute them among the inhabitants, who had gone to ground in cellars. I found it difficult to blame the enemy. Who, then, was to blame for those tortured children with their ghastly green faces, and the still bodies covered with carefully-mended sheets?

At last we met an intelligent staff captain, who directed us to Maretz. There we discovered an appreciative colonel with whom we commenced to make necessary arrangements. The final details the section commanders worked out for themselves with the staffs concerned. We arrived back at our camp a little weary and bedraggled, hoping for a quiet night. Our hopes were fulfilled.

The morning of the 22nd was spent in reconnaissance. At dusk Thomas's and Parslow's sections moved forward from Maurois: Harland had already commenced to supply his guns with shells.

As soon as it was light on the 23rd, Mac and I drove to the railway embankment, from which Parslow's tanks had started on their trek into the battle. We walked over a few fields until, at a road which at "zero" had been our front line, we overtook a Carrier tank which had been much delayed by mechanical trouble. We followed the route of the attacking infantry through orchards and rich enclosed fields—here and there were dead, the prey of machine-guns—until we came to a mill stream, overhung by thick undergrowth, which had so troubled our intelligence officers that elaborate preparations for building field-

bridges had been made. We crossed it by the shallowest of fords. To our astonishment shells began to fall behind us; later we knew that on our right the enemy were not dislodged from the edge of the Pommereuil Wood until the following day. We pushed on over more delicious fields, friendly gardens, and fine pasture, leaving Pommereuil on our right, until, having followed the unmistakable tracks of our tanks,[1] we ran them to ground in an enclosure. They had not yet been unloaded. The situation in front was obscure, and it was doubtful whether they could usefully carry their supplies farther forward.

Parslow told me that the experiment of attacking at 1.30 A.M. instead of at dawn had not been quite successful. The fighting tanks had been handicapped by the darkness, thick mist, and gas. The infantry, running blindly upon machine-gun posts which the tanks could not see, had suffered heavily. It was not until dawn that any appreciable progress was made. Parslow, immediately behind the battle, was compelled continually to stop, but fortunately his tanks escaped shells and his crews gas.

His miserable section passed the night in the enclosure where we had found them. On the 24th another attack was launched to clear the right flank, but it met with little success. The dense undergrowth in the woods and hollows in the ground screened the enemy machine-gunners. At last on the 25th the wood finally was cleared and the Carrier tanks were able to move forward and dump their loads, returning to Maurois on the 26th. It will be clear that the best use was not made of this section. Lorries and limbered waggons can carry up supplies after the battle. To use tanks for such a purpose is pure extravagance.

We left Parslow to his chilly nights and began our five-mile tramp back to Le Cateau along the Landrecies road, keeping a good look-out to the north for Thomas's tanks, but seeing only transport moving on the skyline along the Bavai road, which had known the 5th Division in advance and in retreat. We wondered what the 5th Division would have thought of the thirty or forty aeroplanes fighting mazily overhead in the cloudless sky, or what effect these aeroplanes would have had upon the battle. In these days you were not believed if you told your fellows that there had been three aeroplanes in the sky at once.

So in company with an anecdotal padre we came at dusk to the town of Le Cateau, which had been so furiously shelled that, as we discovered later, the German artillery officer responsible received a decoration. Torn, shattered Le Cateau remained an

[1] These were easily distinguished, as my tanks were the only Mark IV.'s in the neighbourhood. Mark V.'s and "Whippets" leave a different track.

ancient and dignified town, an aristocrat who had suffered cheerfully the blows and buffets of a desperate fight. Old women in their best black-silk dresses stood chatting at the entrances to their cellars. A few children were playing soberly in the quiet streets. Groups of happy soldiers billeted in the place were strolling up and down with their usual air of consummate self-possession. Here and there angry old Frenchmen were searching for valuables among the rubbish and rubble that had been their homes. Along the traffic routes the noisy transport in endless columns shouted and clattered. But the old houses remained undisturbed, proud and a little aloof; you could hear one say to another—

"Of course, my dear, last night was dreadful, but I remember my mother told me that in the year 1554 the French, before they set fire to the place. . . . Of course these plebeian factories and gaudy young villas! How can they know that Cateau Cambrésis was stormed at least ten times during the fifteenth century? After all, we have only been French for a trifle over two hundred years. The old bishop was so charming and such a gentleman. . . ."

We left the old houses to their talk, and passing through the seediest suburbs, great yards, solitary warehouses, sidings and stations, we came to our car, and drove back to Maurois at walking-pace—the roads were terribly congested. Thomas reported in the evening.

Thomas and his section had moved forward to the neighbourhood of Montay, a little village immediately to the west of Le Cateau, at dusk on the night of the 22nd-23rd, arriving about 8 P.M. The crews had no sleep, for the enemy shelled and gassed Montay unmercifully, the bombardment becoming a barrage in the early hours of the morning. Thomas and Connor pressed forward to make a final reconnaissance of the route. It was necessary for the tanks to cross the Selle by a specially-constructed bridge. The ground on either side of the route was marshy.

One tank under Sergeant Fenwick had been equipped with a special apparatus for laying cable. The tank, accompanied by a signal officer, passed over the bridge at dawn, and following closely behind the infantry, laid cable throughout the day to the enormous content of Divisional Headquarters. No sooner was an objective reached than Fenwick arrived with his cable. On one occasion he was a little premature, overrunning the advance, and as his tank drew shell-fire, he was ordered back angrily by a disturbed colonel.

The remaining tanks, heavily loaded with stores, rations, and ammunition, crossed Montay Bridge in column. The first tank caught the door of its sponson in the rails of the bridge, and Thomas, coming back wrathfully to investigate the cause of delay, found the

tank commander and one of his men up to their waists in the cold and muddy water, fishing for the door, which had been lifted off its hinges. They found it, hauled it up and replaced it; but even Thomas was astounded by the extent of the tank commander's vocabulary, and, his rebuke dying on his lips, he hurried away to the calmer atmosphere of the battle.

The Division with which Thomas was operating advanced in three bounds — on a brigade front, the second brigade "leap-frogging" the first, and the third the first and second. Thomas's section was divided into three sub-sections, each of which attended to the wants of one brigade. Thus, when the first brigade, after stiff fighting, had reached its objective, the first sub-section of Carrier tanks which had followed the attack arrived with rations, water, bombs, ammunition, wire, spades, picks, &c., reported to the staff captain of the brigade, and unloaded at sequestered points. The second and third sub-sections followed the example of the first. In each case the scheme worked with mechanical perfection. The infantry were never disappointed. Without employing much-needed fighting men as carrying-parties — without frenzied efforts to push forward tired horse transport over shelled roads, often impassable, a staff captain could be assured that his brigade would receive the necessities of existence as soon as they could be used. And, however far forward the infantry might be, however dangerous the approach to them, the problem was the same for the Carrier tanks.

The tanks serving the first two brigades returned to Maureis when their day's work had been completed, arriving in camp at dusk. The third sub-section came back on the following day. Fenwick and his cable-laying tank was so useful that it was as much as I could do to extract it from the Division on the third, with its crew cheery but thoroughly exhausted.

We received letters of congratulation both from Thomas's Division and from the corps; we had, to my mind, given conclusive proof of the utility of Carrier tanks, properly employed, even in semi-open warfare. Before the battle we had helped to build a bridge. During the battle we had kept the Divisional Commander in communication by laying cable forward as the advance progressed; we had carried stores for three brigades, supplying them on the spot with the necessaries of warfare; we had transported an enormous quantity of shells from the roadside over country impassable to horse transport. And this we had accomplished with obsolete tanks, entirely unsuitable for carrying bulky loads. On no single occasion did we fail to deliver the goods. Again we were independent of roads when good roads were so scarce that a corps was for-

tunate if it possessed one road to itself. We could avoid shelled areas, and we could afford to neglect shell-fire or machine-gun fire. At a pinch we could fight. To my mind our experiences in the later stages of the battle of Amiens and in the second battle of Le Cateau show clearly the remarkable future which must lie in front of Carrier tanks.

Coxhead's Company continued the good work, until the 4th Army had passed beyond the Mormal Forest. Near Landrecies a section of his tanks captured an important bridge-head in curious circumstances.

The tanks were laden with bridge-building material, heavy girders, timbers, hawsers, and so on. According to programme the bridge-head should have fallen to the infantry, the tanks arriving with material for the reconstruction of the bridge, which it was anticipated that the enemy would have destroyed. There was unfortunately a little hitch. When the tanks came on the scene, the enemy were still defending the bridge-head with the utmost vigour. The section commander did not hesitate. His tanks continued to move forward as though they had been fighting tanks. The infantry, who had trained with tanks, advanced in the proper formation. The enemy broke and fled. It was a bloodless victory.

We had been relieved formally on the 25th. Thomas's and Harland's tanks trekked back to Genève on the 26th, Parslow arriving on the night of the 27th. There was no rest for the crews. We had received orders to entrain on the 30th at Roisel, and Roisel was thirteen to fourteen miles by tank route from Genève, which in its turn was more than twenty-five miles from the farthest point which my tanks had reached on the 23rd. But the men were cheerful, and the tanks were carrying light tables, wire-beds, cupboards, deck-chairs, felt and planks from the German R.E. store, jam and goulasch from a German ration dump near Le Cateau, fresh vegetables from Maurois, tents from three Armies,—they meant nothing to tanks accustomed to carrying ten tons without flinching, and we knew that whatever our destination we should find there nakedness. The weather was fine, the route was familiar, the going was good; in spite of multifarious mechanical troubles we made Roisel on the 29th and entrained on the 30th for the railhead at Beaumetz, a few miles from our old quarters at Wailly.

(*The End.*)

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

MR CHURCHILL AND HIS RIVALS—A COMPETITION IN INCOMPETENCE—M. CLEMENCEAU AND PRESIDENT WILSON—THE SPIDER AND THE FLY—ECONOMIC NONSENSE—THE REAL WICKEDNESS OF THE PEACE.

WHEN Mr Winston Churchill announced with his customary pomp that the Labour Party is "quite unfitted for the responsibility of government," that were it now entrusted with power it would "through its incompetence come hopelessly to grief at our expense," he said what was obviously true. What he said was also obviously irrelevant. At the present hour this country, like some others, is safe for democracy, and democracy has nothing whatever to do with competence. It chooses its servants by the very simple plan of dropping marked papers in a box, and does not, and cannot, put the candidates to any test of character or ability. The last Franchise Bill, which was passed without adequate discussion and without excuse, added some 12,000,000 fresh and unknown voters to the electoral roll. By the rules of the game these 12,000,000 must be given whatever they ask for. That they will desire competence in their rulers is almost beyond the possibility of belief. Whatever they do or do not do is a gamble, and nothing more. As Lord Curzon said, just before he cast his vote for the hazardous measure, we were taking "a leap in the dark." After which, all those who were in any way responsible for the passage of the Franchise Bill would be wise to leave "competence" out of the question.

Moreover, Messrs Churchill and George, in attempting to form a central party, which shall keep them in office for life, are placing themselves in a position of absurdity. Having done their best to turn the government of the British Empire into a gamble, they are now thwarting the will of the people. They would silence with their rhetoric, if they could, the sacred voice of the people, which we all know is the voice of God; or, if we don't know it, it is not from lack of telling. They have added, for no reason that was apparent, 12,000,000 voters to the register, and they must abide by the decision which they chose to challenge. For those in whose eyes the Franchise Act was a calamity, and who put no faith in the ridiculous superstition of democracy, it is a duty to thwart and to oppose. The House of Commons, being wholly to

blame for the leap in the dark, must accept the consequences with what respect it can reserve for its own actions. To hinder the logical conclusion of its folly is merely to add the sin of hypocrisy to the crime of recklessness.

Nor is Mr Churchill the politician to charge those who aspire to succeed him with incompetence. He himself went early into politics, without a special aptitude or a long, laborious training. He took a short cut to office by a sudden change of sides, and his career has been a career of blunders. He can hardly be proud of the work which he has done at the Admiralty; he was largely responsible for stirring up the bad feeling of class-hatred which exists in the country; and even to his insensitive ear the word "Lamlash" should still sound raucously. For the rest, he has mastered all the tricks of the political trade. He knows how to get office for himself and his friends, and he knows how to stick to office when he has got it. But these are not the gifts of statesmanship, and they scarcely entitle him to criticise the gifts of others. Indeed, it is difficult to prophesy what difference, if any, the Labour Party would bring to the government of our country. It has a policy, no doubt, for use upon the hustings, just as the Coalition is eager with eloquent professions when it is threatened with an election. But Labour, like the Coalition, would probably be impotent in office, though not for the same reason. The Coalition, itself governed by fear, attempts to govern the country by concessions. As the wolf agitation approaches the sleigh in which the Coalition tries to escape, it flings out snippets of communism by way of ransom. It has no principles, no creed, no philosophy. Its one object is to stay in office, lest it be forced to consult again the vast electorate which it has called into being. In other words, it is using all its energies to evade the consequences of its own Franchise Act, and is thus, as we have said, giving a clear proof of its faith in the sacred principles of democracy. Inevitably it has destroyed the country's faith in its governance. There is no class which has not discovered its susceptibility to blackmail. With exquisite delicacy it yields to the slightest turn of the screw, and it hastens to withdraw whatever measures it has been reckless enough to introduce.

What the Coalition has done, Labour could do—that is, nothing. Alarmed by the strenuous opposition which it would encounter, unsure of itself and its purposes, Labour would be ineffectual, as the coalition of hungry opportunists has proved itself. It would speedily discover that the easiest policy is to drift along the stream, though it would drift less swiftly than the Coalition, because it would be compelled at times to thwart the absurd pretensions of its own class.

Herein truly it would have an advantage in force over the Coalition, since it would always be in a stronger position to oppose the greed and egoism of those who have sent it to the House of Commons. Set a thief to catch a thief is a sound maxim. Were the leaders of Labour in power, they would know far better than a timorous Coalition knows how to get the better of tricks which they have learned to play themselves. Nothing can more readily reassure the citizen who has not a blind faith in the parrot-cries of democracy, than to watch a labour leader, safely placed in office, deal with his own kind. He does not trouble to be conciliatory, after the furtive manner of Mr George and Sir Auckland Geddes. He speaks to those, who were his supporters, in the vernacular, which they can understand, and it is not his fault if they go satisfied away.

In competence, as in result, therefore, there's not a pin to choose between Labour and the Coalition. If Labour comes in, it will be because the country is rightly disgusted at the cynical opportunism of the Coalition. If the Coalition stays in long enough, Labour will gain all that it wants in snippets. Why, then, if these be the alternatives, should we perplex ourselves unduly? Ruin will overtake us, sooner or later, despite the wisdom and industry of our best citizens. At the same time, we confess that we should contemplate the elevation of Mr Arthur Henderson to the Foreign Office with a kind of discomfort. Mr Henderson has expressed aloud his sympathy with the Bolsheviks. He has never expressed very loudly his sympathy with the British Empire. Never confident of our ultimate victory, perhaps not keenly desirous of it, he would if he could have dragged his party into the deplorable adventure of Stockholm. We know more about his friendship with Mr J. R. Macdonald than about his jealousy for England's honour, and if it be true that he went to Petrograd with full powers to appoint himself Ambassador to stricken Russia, he has evidently no greater respect for foreign policy than had those who sent him thither, and who until now have vouchsafed no contradiction to the statements which he made at Widnes. For the rest, the last fourteen years have taught us to expect nothing save cunning from a British Government, and we do not believe that we shall be saved or lost by putting a new name upon an old thing.

But if we forget the vague dreams which once we dreamed of courage and competence, and look at the question of parties from another point of view, we shall see that there are very strong reasons why government by Labour should not be encouraged. It introduces, in the first place, a new division into politics — a division not of

creed but of class. No longer could there be any excuse under a Labour government for upholding this political opinion or that. A complete disruption of the country would be followed by the preaching of such a gospel of selfishness as is set forth by Messrs Thomas and Smillie on the one hand, by Mr Churchill and the Lord Chancellor on the other. We should be compelled to subscribe to a new principle, to support a new method, of government. Never before have we been asked to vote for a candidate because he has been brought up to a particular kind of employment or a peculiar standard of comfort. Hitherto we have made, in politics, a vertical cleavage—the Tories, of whatever class they may have been, voting on one side, the Radicals on the other. Now we are bidden to make a horizontal cleavage of the nation, and to assert arbitrarily that all those above a certain line are opposed naturally to all those below it. This is mischievous and untrue. It shows the way to the worst form of snobbishness (never has Great Britain, expert in these matters, seen a viler snobbishness than that of the working classes), and it intensifies a hundred-fold the class-hatred which Messrs George and Churchill created for their own purpose of catching votes, and which now inspires them with a panic fear. Never was a Frankenstein more justly and bitterly afraid of the Monster of his own creation than are those two opportunists of the class-hatred which ten years ago they called into being.

"Politics," said a statesman who knew the truth of his statement, "is a dirty trade." And it is proposed to do away with the one piece of good-fellowship which in old days made politics bearable. When parties were divided by opinion and by faith, we did not vote according to our upbringing or our trade. You might find in any class those who believed in stability and tradition side by side with those who cried aloud about change and progress. A General Election then meant a conflict of temperaments and not a conflict of classes. It was rather an excuse for many pleasant approaches. Men were brought together by a similarity of creed who otherwise might have found no meeting-ground. And now, because the Coalition has failed, because, in the words of Lord Birkenhead, who is pledged to support it, it is "invertebrate and undefined," we are asked with menaces to support Mr George or labour, to cling to the hatreds which the Radicals fomented, to admit that the only differences which exist in the country are differences of standing and employment. Rather than perpetuate this kind of civil war, we prefer to vote for neither, to insist that the old Tory Party, which was no party of snobs and found its loyal adherents in

every class, should be reconstructed, and that some semblance of principle should be restored to the political life of the country. And principle has no more chance of coming from labour than from the Coalition. The Coalition, formed as we know for no better reason than to keep a certain set of men in office, men who disagree naturally one with another, is a party, if indeed it deserves the name of party, which willingly sacrifices its convictions to office, and is perforce unprincipled. Labour also is unprincipled, and for another cause. It has shown itself always and in all things bitterly sectarian. It professes little or no interest in the affairs of Great Britain. It knows not the meaning of idealism or of sacrifice. Its outlook is limited to the workshop and the parish. Its one hope, its one policy are higher wages; its one method of obtaining what it wants is blackmail. If the railwaymen are asking something more for less work than heretofore, they care not a jot if their colleagues, the engineers, are asked to pay more for their food than they can afford. If the coal-miners insist successfully upon a rise in wages, it matters not to them that their rapacity causes thousands of honest men and women all the world over to shiver over an empty grate. So little do any of them know about economics that they have not yet grasped the simple facts that to do as little as they can is not the best way to increase production, and that higher wages than a trade allows send up the price of all commodities. But they are not diffident, and if only they can get a majority, the leaders of labour are ready and eager to become our lords of misrule.

And they will rule for themselves, and themselves alone. They have no interest save in their own class; they will adopt no policy, they will pass no laws which do not benefit that class definitely and effectively. A new kind of corruption will hamper the State, larger and more dangerous than any we have yet known. The middle classes, which labour in imitation of the Soviets condemns as the *bourgeoisie*, will be penalised in pocket and esteem until they be driven out of existence. The only way in which salvation can come to us is by division in the ranks of labour. And let it be remembered that the Tory elements in labour are more savagely opposed to its Radical elements than are the older parties in the State one to another. There is a greater difference between Mr A. Henderson and Mr Stephen Walsh (let us say) than between Mr George and Mr Bonar Law. And Mr Churchill and Lord Birkenhead are doing the country a vast disservice by pretending that they alone can save us from a peril which is largely of their own contriving. They would form, if they could, a pleasant little private company, the board of which would be joined by Mr

George after allotment; they would ensure a comfortable and permanent living for themselves, and have their portraits painted as the saviours of Great Britain. A pleasant little plot truly, which is happily foredoomed to failure. And they do not understand what harm they have done by throwing down a useless challenge to labour, and by trying to convert what might have remained a disunited rabble into a solid army.

There is yet another objection to labour, which may not be overlooked or minimised. Behind the titular leaders of the working classes there lurks a band of "intellectuals" who have never done an hour's manual work in their lives, and who are determined to make use of their dupes to the uttermost. These "intellectuals," who mean to direct labour, if not to lead it, are socialists and internationalists to a man. They have neither interest nor pride in their own country. Not one of them has ever boasted, as he might, that he was a citizen of no mean State. Pretending to believe in the universal brotherhood of man, they are the bitter foes of those who should be nearest to them. Unceasingly they brag of their superiority to others. They smile a smile of no indulgence at the antiquated virtue of patriotism. Throughout the war they were pro-German and "defeatist." Their vanity prompted them to use long arguments which should prove that England was always in the wrong. They expressed an arrogant doubt if ever their German friends were charged with atrocities. They knew better than the poor devils who had suffered, better than the trained lawyers asked to investigate the evidence. They thought that a resolute scepticism proved them to be high above such poor vices as patriotism and anger. In their obscure journals, as in their acrid pamphlets, they cunningly pleaded the cause of Germany, and like other traitors, they brought comfort to the camp of those who were fighting against the country which gave them birth.

They are a sorry band, plotting in secret and arming the militant leaders of labour with literary explosives. And if labour ever be asked to form a Government, it will have to deal with the gang of intellectual doctrinaires to whom it is profoundly indebted. The doctrinaires are as wily as they are dangerous, and they will not come out into the open unless they are driven thither by vanity, which, after a love of conspiracy, is their strongest passion. How will labour deal with them if it come into its kingdom? In those happy days, when Mr Henderson is Minister of Foreign Affairs, will he accept the advice of the intellectuals, who will haunt his back-stairs? If he do, then will the ruin of the Empire be made doubly sure. If he do not, he will have to fight a

secret opposition, which may show itself more formidable than the opposition which will be arrayed against him in the House of Commons. If the rank and file of the working men were ever permitted to look upon the vain, reckless, irresponsible, tea-drinking internationals, who aspire to direct their policy, they would know how to treat them. But the tea-drinkers are kept wisely in the background by the leaders; they work underground like the mole; and they will not show themselves to the workers of the land, until they are prepared, like the fanatics they are, to do the work of Lenin. They, perhaps, are the greatest danger in which the supremacy of labour would involve us. Meanwhile we would entreat the Coalition to cease comparing its own incompetence with the obvious incompetence of labour. The Franchise Bill, which commands us to take whatever governors the unlettered mob sends us, was their creation, and it cannot yet be gainsaid. Nor shall we again discover Ministers who will govern the country in accord with honest principles, until we abolish the Coalition, and demand of our candidates that they shall state honourably in their election addresses what they themselves think and believe, and shall cease to repeat, like parrots, the name of the man whose poor ambition it is to remain a tenant for life of 10 Downing Street.

It was pointed out by Bolingbroke many years ago that the art of government was the only art which demanded no apprenticeship of its practisers. And the reproach, just then, may more justly be levelled at the politicians of to-day. The peace, which at last has been signed in Europe, was made by those who have served no apprenticeship. We all remember how loudly Mr Wilson boasted that he and his colleagues were "plain" men who knew nothing of diplomacy, and yet spoke with confidence because they represented tens of millions of voters. They were "plain" indeed, as "plain" as their own peace, which is weak where it should be strong, and strong where it should be weak. The danger to the peace of Europe has been, and still is, Prussia. Napoleon knew this well, and would have made an end of Prussia, if only Alexander I. had permitted it. And our "plain" men, assembled in Paris, have treated Austria and Hungary, whose guilt was far less than Germany's, with a needless severity, and we have left it in Germany's power to recover much of her ancient strength and to take her revenge in due time upon France and upon England.

Justice must be sternly administered in the affairs of nations as in the affairs of men. The one and only method of ensuring peace is to prove to the aggressor that his policy does not pay. Leagues of Nations are, we believe,

useless. Germany, unchanged, if weakened, by the war, will remain of the same mind as heretofore, unless it be shown clearly to her that her dream of universal empire is impossible. If this truth cannot be borne in upon her mind, save by destruction, then she should have been destroyed. The economists will tell us that in destroying, or even in impairing, Germany, we shall lose a good customer for our wares. That may be; but we shall presently discover new markets, and, at least, we shall have done our best to ensure peace in the world. Other nations which aspired to universal dominion have fired their shot and failed, but the mundane movement has gone on comfortably and profitably for the rest. The battle of Salamis broke the power of Persia; it did not bring ruin upon Greece. The senseless ambition of Charles XII. eventually reduced Sweden to the position of a second-rate power. But other powers arose to take its place, and civilisation will not founder because, after a brief fifty years of prosperity, united Germany has been driven upon the rocks.

These and many other considerations Mr J. M. Keynes omits from his 'Economic Consequences of the Peace.'[1] Mr Keynes writes now as a man, now as an economist, and we prefer him in his human character. As he himself sat upon the Supreme Economic Council, perhaps he should not have hastened so speedily into print. But that is a point upon which he perforce came to a decision himself, and he must bear the full weight of responsibility. His sketches of the "plain" men who settled the affairs of Europe are excellently done. Mr Keynes has a happy way with the branding-iron; and though we imagine that neither Mr George nor Mr Wilson will take much pleasure in his work, he will satisfy all those who are not natural worshippers of the politicians. And yet, in spite of himself, he has painted M. Clemenceau in the truest colours. What he meant for a bitter caricature seems to us a flattering portrait. His villain is our hero, and by this divergence alone the value of his argument stands or falls.

In M. Clemenceau's policy he sees the policy of an old man who is not interested in humanity, who "neither expects nor hopes that we are on the threshold of a new age," of a statesman, disillusioned, and yet guided, by the past, who will not be led away into a false security by phrases or ideals. In thus refusing to be deceived or to deceive himself, M. Clemenceau proved his right to dominate the Conference. "He felt about France," says Mr Keynes, "what Pericles felt about Athens—unique value in her, nothing else mattering; but

[1] London: Macmillan & Co.

his theory of politics was Bismarck's. . . . His principles for the Peace can be expressed simply. In the first place, he was a foremost believer in the view of German psychology that the German understands nothing but intimidation, that he is without generosity, or remorse in negotiation, that there is no advantage he will not take of you, that he is without honour, pride, or mercy. Therefore you must never negotiate with a German; you must dictate to him." All this is perfectly true about Germany, and Mr Keynes's dispraise of M. Clemenceau is a eulogy of his clear-sightedness. Germany cannot be trusted, and no Frenchman could be trusted who did not insist upon the strongest guarantees, who was not resolute so effectively to weaken Germany that she could not for many a long year make another sudden dash across the frontier. Had M. Clemenceau insisted upon less than he did, he would have been no true patriot. There lies Germany, just across the French frontier. She exceeds France in wealth and population. She has during the last few years deliberately destroyed the mines and factories of France, that she may have the start in industrial recovery. She has destroyed French towns and blotted out a generation of gallant Frenchmen. Therefore, not only is she not entitled to any consideration; but M. Clemenceau would have failed in his trust had he not done his best to weaken a dangerous neighbour in pocket and opportunity. It is Mr Keynes's infirmity that, being an internationalist in sentiment, he cannot perceive the justice and the necessity of a Carthaginian Peace.

And so he looked hopefully for the coming of Mr Wilson, as to one who would bring solace to a troubled world, and he was wofully disappointed. "With what curiosity, anxiety, and hope," he exclaims dithyrambically, "we sought a glimpse of the features and bearing of the man of destiny who, coming from the West, was to bring healing to the wounds of the ancient parent of his civilisation and lay for us the foundations of the future. The disillusion was so complete, that some of those who had trusted most hardly dared speak of it." Mr Keynes and his friends had, indeed, formed a very wrong idea of the President. They had believed him to be self-willed and obstinate; they found him undetermined, neither a scholar nor a student, a man without the culture of the world, and not at all sensitive to his environment. What could the poor President do but play blind-man's buff with MM. Clemenceau and George? "Never could a man," says Mr Keynes, "have stepped into the parlour a more perfect and predestined victim to the finished accomplishments of the Prime Minister. The Old World was tough in wicked-

ness anyhow; the Old World's heart of stone might blunt the sharpest blade of the bravest knight-errant. But this blind and deaf Don Quixote was entering a cavern where the swift and glittering blade was in the hands of the adversary." For our part we are thankful that it was. Mr Wilson had done Europe enough harm with his fourteen points, transmitted from Berlin by way of Washington, before he came to these shores; and it was vastly to the advantage of Europe that he proved himself to be nothing more than a Nonconformist minister.

When Mr Keynes drops the *rôle* of a man and an observer, and takes up that of an economist, he is less amusing and far more dangerous. He leaves out of the argument all such human feelings as honour and justice, and fills up the gaps with figures. He detaches himself completely from all wholesome partisanship. As far as he is concerned, the country to which he belongs might not have been interested in the war. His one passion is to save Germany distress or inconvenience. "It is only the Treaty's extreme immoderation," says he, ". . . which may save the situation in the long-run." "Save the situation," indeed! That phrase shows where his sympathy lies. Only once has he a single reproof for Germany. "Moved by insane delusion and reckless self-regard," he writes, "the German people overturned the foundations on which we all lived and built." That is all. Reproaches are hurled at the Allies on many a page. Mr Keynes is very careful to belittle the harm done by our enemies in the war. Writing of Belgium, he says: "The first onrush of the Germans did some damage locally." As to France, in some places she has gained by the conflict: "The value of Calais and Boulogne must have been increased by the new work of various kinds executed for the use of the British Army." As this new work would not have been done had not Germany made its attack upon Europe, perhaps France should be asked to pay an indemnity to Germany for value received.

With whatever punishment is inflicted upon Germany he quarrels. He objects to the expropriation of German owners in Alsace-Lorraine because the mineral wealth of these provinces has been greatly developed since 1871, and because German economic interests there are closely bound up with interests in Germany itself. "Alsace-Lorraine," we are told, "has been a part of the German Empire for nearly fifty years—a considerable majority of its population is German-speaking—and it has been the scene of Germany's most important economic enterprises." So might a burglar prove his right to his swag because he had turned it to a profitable use. Again, Mr Keynes thinks

that the Germans will be harshly excluded from Egypt. "Not only are special privileges renounced, but by Article 150 ordinary liberties are withdrawn, the Egyptian Government being accorded 'complete liberty of action in regulating the status of German nationals and the conditions under which they may establish themselves in Egypt.'" Has Mr Keynes forgotten the use which the Germans made of their free access to Egypt before the war, how they intrigued against the British and did their best to stir up rebellion? We should be fools indeed if we had not learned the lesson of caution which they have taught us.

On another page he objects to our control of the German mines. "It is almost," says he, "as though the Powers of Continental Europe were to be placed in a majority on the Thames Conservancy or the Port of London." They would assuredly have been if Germany had won; but Mr Keynes never admits into the account the purposes of Germany. Had the victory been hers, she would not have troubled her mind about the economic security of her enemies. She would have put the world under her feet, and exacted tribute from all those upon whom, against their will, she forced the war. Nor is there any other method of bringing home to Germany the enormity of her misdeeds except punishment, condign and severe. And Mr Keynes talks of our "imbecile greed." Truly that greed would be imbecile which set Germany on her legs again merely that she might bring money into our coffers.

Whether Germany can or cannot pay the just bill that has been presented to her we do not know. That will be discovered presently. When Bismarck sent his account to France in 1871 he did not make an inventory of her goods. He thought that probably she could not pay what he asked, and when she disappointed him he wanted to go to war again with her, because he had not bled her enough. The settlement after a war cannot and should not be based upon philanthropy. We agree with Mr Keynes that the sight of the starving children of Germany is deplorable. We should agree with him more heartily if he deplored with an equal sentiment the starvation of the children of Lille and other French towns. But Germany has brought the suffering on herself and on the world, and she must still bear the responsibility. That the sins of the fathers are visited on the children unto the third and fourth generation is not a piece of rhetoric, but a stern fact.

In the last chapter Mr Keynes presents us with the remedies which he himself would apply, were omnipotence his. In the first place, he would cancel all the debts which still exist among the

Allies. If this be not done, then will France and England and the rest, denied by his philanthropy any sufficient reparation from Germany, be compelled to pay interest and capital until the end of time, because they have won the war. But since this suggestion would involve the United States in the greatest loss, it is from the United States that it must come. For the rest, his remedies are absurd enough to throw a doubt upon the seriousness of his book. He would fix the total payment to be made by Germany at 2000 millions. He would knock a quarter off this for the surrender of merchant ships and submarine cables. He would ask that the balance should be exempt from interest, and should be paid in thirty annual instalments of fifty millions, beginning in 1923! Thus Germany would be given three years to find one quarter of the sum which France found easily in 1871. And as Mr Keynes would abolish the Reparation Committee, it is unlikely that the second instalment would ever be paid. A better plan and more simple would be to endow Germany for ever with all the money and raw materials which she needs.

Lastly, he proposes that the blockade should be raised in Russia, and that Germany should be asked to revive Russian trade. Thus the miscreants, who for their own profit inaugurated Bolshevism, should be permitted to turn it once more to their advantage. If once the Germans got into Russia, no power on earth would ever get them out, and their victory would be complete. Their military expansion would march, as always, with their industrial. The wealth of Russia would be their booty, and in a few years they would march undisturbed into India, and destroy our influence in Egypt, which their politicians have always described as England's spine. "It is our interest," says Mr Keynes, "to hasten the day when German agents and organisers will be in a position to set in train in every Russian village the impulses of ordinary economic motive." Then will the Kaiser or his successor welcome the bagman's millennium, and will take care that conquered France and England take no share of the profit.

"I have paid little heed to Austria, Hungary, and Russia," says Mr Keynes. He was so busy in writing his book to plead the cause of Germany that he had not space to touch upon the real wickedness of the peace. The Allies, who should have aimed, as we said, at a strong Austria, a strong Hungary, and a weak Germany, have made the strength and weakness change places. They have not left Germany so happy and prosperous as Mr Keynes would like to see it, but they have left her with every opportunity of recovering a dangerous position. They have destroyed Hungary and

Austria utterly. Cut off from the sea, stripped, on the foolish plea of self-determination, of provinces which were essential to their livelihood, they are to-day in a pitiable condition. We do not envy the ingenious gentleman who invented the two new states, Czecho-Slovakia and Jugo-Slavia. Their composite names prove their composite characters. That they will last long beneath the fanciful masks which have been put upon them we do not believe. But at what a cost will the theatrical experiment have been made! How many lost lives will it have entailed? How much misery and starvation will it have brought with it! But pedantry must be served, and pedantry has neither conscience nor memory.

Take the case of Hungary, for instance. Her share in the guilt of the war was small enough. She was dragged by her neighbour inevitably into the conflict. To-day her plight is miserable enough. She has been ravaged by the Roumanians; she has been butchered by Bolsheviks, whose baleful rule she has been wise enough and strong enough to discard. And all the help or sympathy which the Allies have tendered her has been to suggest that the sentences of death, passed upon the Jews, who murdered and tortured her citizens, should be commuted! Yet some day Hungary will be forced into alliances and commercial treaties. She must find markets for her produce, and manufacturers from abroad who shall supply her with what she needs. Shall she also be offered up upon the altar of sacrifice to Germany's rapacity? Shall she follow Russia, according to Mr Keynes's formula, into the Teutonic maw?

There are many and sound reasons against such a policy. In the first place, Hungary has no longing for a close-knit friendship with Germany, especially after the bitter experience of the last five years. For many years she has turned in the moments of her stress to England. In a little book,[1] written by Mr Charles Sproxton, a young scholar who was killed in the war, you may read how, after the revolution of 1848, it was Hungary's first impulse to seek the aid of England. Palmerston refused to see the Hungarian envoy, because he would not hurt the susceptibilities of Austria, which he regarded as a wall against Russian aggression, but the reception of Pulszky by the English has not yet been forgotten, and the seeds of friendship then sown have borne fruit. Once again Hungary looks to us, and there is no reason why we should not grasp her proffered hand. From her rich agricultural land she produces that of which we stand in need, and we are not without the

[1] 'Palmerston and the Hungarian Revolution,' by Charles Sproxton. Cambridge: At the University Press.

power of supplying her wants. Politically, too, as well as commercially, she may serve our interests well. Broken and dismembered as she is, she remains a gateway to the East. If she comes under German influence, as she may if left to herself, she will fall again, reluctantly, into the clutch of Germany, and with her enforced aid Germany may yet realise her dream of Mittel Europa. What she asks of us is little enough — merely sympathy in her distress and the offer of friendship and counsel. Our name and prestige were never higher than they are to-day in Eastern Europe, and we may still knit honourable and profitable alliances with nations ready to serve us, which neglect and indifference will inevitably drive into the rough and greedy arms of Germany.

Printed by William Blackwood and Sons.